



# messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 26 – Number 11

March 2009

**Special Features This Issue**

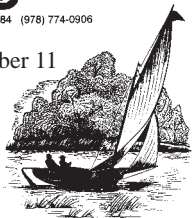
*"The Starship and the Canoe"*  
*"Wind and Waves"* – *"Restless Boat Syndrome"*  
*"Lowly Worm from Penzance to Plymouth"*  
*"The Advantage of 8-Footers"*



# **messing about in BOATS**

29 BURLEY ST., WENHAM, MA 01984 (978) 774-0906

Volume 26 – Number 11  
March 2009



US subscription price is \$32 for one year.  
Canadian / overseas subscription prices are  
available upon request

Address is 29 Burley St  
Wenham, MA 01984-1043

Telephone is 978-774-0906

There is no machine

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## Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



You'll find quite a lot about kayaks in this issue, not because I planned a special issue on them but rather because a lot about them came in all at once. When this sort of thing happens I tend to pile on additional material that I might have in hand on the topic and can go over the top, as they say.

Turner Matthews' lengthy review of *The Starship and the Canoe*, focusing on George Dyson's unique experiences researching and recreating the Aleut baidarka, starts off a run of kayak tales. It happened that I had in hand a review of *Kayaks of Greenland, the History and Development of the Greenland Hunting Kayak 1600-2000* that I thought appropriate to follow on Turner's review. And as I had reviewed George Dyson's book, *Baidarka*, back in 1991, a book that grabbed me so hard that I obtained his plans for a two-hole baidarka and even ordered from him his recommended hull covering fabric fully intending to build me one (I never did, another story!), I piled this on after the Greenland book review. Result, seven pages of book reviews, all about traditional Eskimo kayaks.

While this was all in the works here, an essay arrived from Gail Ferris about the effects of adiabatic winds on paddling in north-western Greenland and Baffin Island in the high Arctic. Those of you who have been with us for a while will recall bygone adventure tales from Gail ranging from Greenland to Alaska's north slope. This added three more pages to the spread.

Enjoy, even if you are not specifically interested in kayaks they do represent a very unique form of small craft from the historical viewpoint. Originating in a culture isolated from the rest of humanity for thousands of years in the world's harshest environment, these people built boats from animal parts and skins that worked extraordinarily well for hunting food, a testimony to the mankind's innate abilities to contrive means of survival from materials at hand. Certainly a superb technology of its time.

A major reward of doing what I do, after 25 years and over 600 issues, is being able to put together issue after issue that

each seem unique to me. Your ongoing contributions provide contemporary vignettes over a broad range of topics. I additionally increasingly add abstract content that I feel is talking to us from other small publications. And I delve back into the past for views on messing about in boats from those eras, often the same sort of boats but with user experiences often quite different.

The most common remark we find on renewals is, "Don't change a thing!" It's nice to know that readers like what we provide. I feel no need to change a thing as each issue provides ongoing change. I deliberately chose the magazine's title to imply a broad range of small boating news. This allows me to run wild on content within very broad margins. This is where the fun is for me and hopefully for most of you. A too common mistake of small, publication wannabees is to focus too narrowly on just the one topic of interest to its editor/publisher. Result, too few readers to sustain it.

I am asked from time to time how I mess about in boats, so a year ago or so I ran a feature on "Paddling with Charlie" that explained this. I'd love to try some of the other ways I get to read about from all your contributions, but others do not appeal to me at all. I avoid that too narrow focus on just what I personally wish to do in the interests of providing an open ended content that will have a wider appeal.

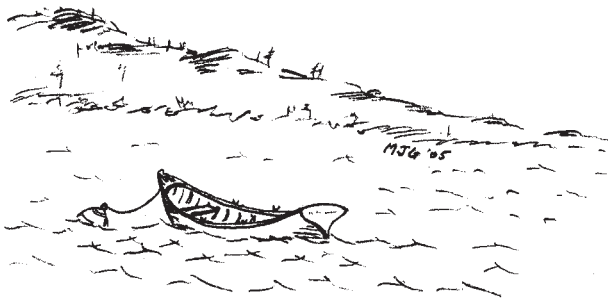
I also get to indulge, when available content provides, in publishing long articles (like Turner's review), even in serializations of really long articles. I was never a *Readers' Digest* guy, I like long stories that I can really get into in depth. I prefer books (I am a history addict) that take 350-400 or more pages to cover their subjects, pages that are not overly verbose to use up space but are dense with the details that fill out the vision of what is being described. Only problem with this is that my evening reading (I do not watch TV other than weather and a few chosen non-sensational news programs) ends too soon when I nod off. My years are shortening the usable length of my days!

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## On the Cover...

Eric Schade is one of a number of small craft enthusiasts who finds model boats an appealing adjunct to their activities with the real thing. In Eric's case that is designing kayaks for home building, some of which are offered by Chesapeake Light Craft. On the cover Eric is pictured subjecting his own design R/C model to its sea trials on a pond near his home in Maine. He tells about his *Independence* in this issue.



## From the Journals of Constant Waterman

By Matthew Goldman

I spent a weekend at a slip in Massachusetts and got to observe and participate in a bit of the goin's on.

Upwind apiece a powerboat and a sailboat, both about 36', shared a slip between two finger piers. The wind ripped through the harbor at 15 knots. There's nothing like a little breeze to bring out latent talent.

Anyway, the skipper of the powerboat enlisted the aid of a couple of fellows, I wouldn't dare call them sailors, to give him a hand to "turn this rig around." It seems he wanted to scrub the side of his boat away from the pier. Because of the breeze he thought he needed some help to turn it around. Boy, did he ever. The two clowns on the finger pier each cast off a mooring line and the skipper gave her plenty of throttle to overcome the headwind. But the clowns neglected to cast off the further stern line made fast to the walkway.

You guessed it. The powerboat, still tethered on the inboard quarter, pivoted on that line and slewed around, crashing into the sailboat alongside. The skipper slammed her into reverse but their rails caught together. The sailboat got a good shaking before she came loose. The skipper then proceeded to try again. Take two, the skipper gave her plenty of throttle to overcome the headwind...

After abusing the sailboat a second time it dawned on the skipper there might just be a problem. I forbore to listen to what he called the two fellows on the pier. Some of those words I hadn't heard since I served in the Navy. For some reason the powerboat skipper scuttled his plan to turn himself around. With a bit more effort he might have scuttled the sailboat as well.

That proved to be just the beginning. That afternoon another seaman, running a 40' cabin cruiser, came waltzing into the water between the piers and aimed for his slip, upwind. At the last moment, halfway into his berth, he had the revelation to back her in. Except he had cranky engines. He backed her down, spun the wheel, and... lost his starboard engine. Next thing he knew he had also lost control. The wind obligingly slammed him into our pier across the way. Amazing the amount of sail area on some of these powerboats. Had I been aboard I'd have taken at least one reef.

His poor wife scurried about the deck without a line, a boathook, or even *Knight's Modern Seamanship*. She probably wouldn't have had quite enough time to read the relevant chapters. The wind pinned their boat, amidships, against a piling at the end of a finger pier. The bow and stern took it in turn to bounce off innocent sailboats in adjoining slips. At one point the powerboat's bow came within a foot of *MoonWind's* transom. I recollect telling myself, "I don't need this."

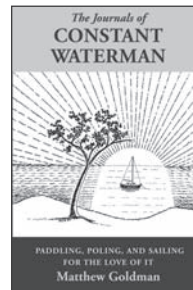
Four of us leaped aboard moored sailboats and struggled to fend her off. Another fellow jumped into his dinghy and started the motor.

"Quick," I said to the woman, "find a long line to pass to him." A minute later she came on deck with a mooring line, it may have been 12' long.

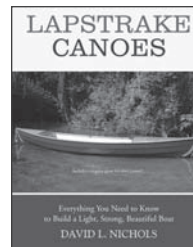
The fellow with the dinghy took their roding, anchor and all, and zipped to the opposite pier where three stout fellows waited to take a strain on it. The skipper put his one engine in gear and scraped his inglorious way along the piling as the impromptu crew hauled him about and warped him into his slip. His swim platform suffered numerous indignities.

Finally, a 50' ketch came stumbling into the harbor. Through a gaping hole I could count her vee-berth cushions. I spoke with her skipper later on the beach. "I can't understand it," he said to me. "All I did was put on her on autopilot and lay below for 30 seconds." Amazing how quickly some rocks can move when nobody keeps an eye on 'em.

## NEW BOOKS FOR MESSERS



Matthew Goldman's wise, funny, beautifully written and intensely *boaty* stories are now available in a book, with over 50 pen-and-ink illustrations by the author. A wonderful gift! 336 pages, paperback, \$14



Detailed instructions plus an extraordinary sequence of 300 color photos make lapstrake boatbuilding accessible to beginners. Includes full plans for three canoes. 160 pages, paperback, \$21.95

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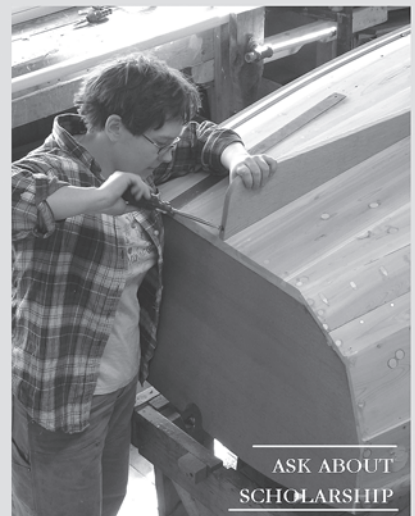
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# You write to us about...

## Activities & Events...

### 2009 Lake Pepin Messabout

The Lake Pepin Messabout is a regional gathering of those who build or love home-built boats of all types in the greater Milwaukee area. Admission is free. It will again be held at beautiful Lake Pepin on the Minnesota/Wisconsin border on June 5-7. The high cliffs and woodlands surrounding the lake create a beautiful boating site. The lake is huge and absorbs lots of boats, there is no crowding. The sailing can be adventurous and some wonderful boats will be seen cruising in the area. The current (Lake Pepin is part of the Mississippi River) is a non-factor since the lake is so big.

Day trippers are welcome, there are two ramps nearby. A swap meet will take place on Saturday between 2-5pm on the beach. We'll get the boats into the water on Saturday and enjoy a potluck supper that evening, so bring along some food to share.

For all the details visit our website at [Lakepepinmessabout.com/More\\_Fun\\_Stuff.html](http://Lakepepinmessabout.com/More_Fun_Stuff.html)

Bill Paxton, Apple Valley, MN, (952) 431-5512



### WoodenBoat Show Returns to Mystic Seaport

Please join us June 26-28 at Mystic Seaport for the 18th Annual *WoodenBoat* Show, owned and produced by *WoodenBoat* magazine. Last year's *WoodenBoat* Show was an overwhelming success with a verified attendance of 13,000 in just three days! Mystic Seaport has proven itself to be an ideal location for our event.

We have a variety of new, interesting, and informative demonstrations, exhibits, and boat building events for all wooden boat aficionados. We have updated the Show's layout this year to create a more centralized event and to accommodate more wooden boat-related exhibits. Expanded dock space will allow us to host even more in-water boats. This show is a must see for any and all wooden boat and marine history enthusiasts.

Please visit our website, [www.theWoodenBoatShow.com](http://www.theWoodenBoatShow.com) to view a slideshow of the 2008 *WoodenBoat* Show and for more details and information regarding the 2009 Show.

The *WoodenBoat* Show, Brooklin, ME

## Adventures & Experiences...



### From Family Archives

Enclosed is an interesting photo from my family archives depicting two couples fishing in Bodfish Stream near Lake Onawa, Maine. It's dated 1906. Note the dress for this fishing expedition. The couple on the right is my grandfather and grandmother, Dr and Mrs Thomas Springall, he was a dentist from Malden, Massachusetts.

Ray Youmans, Brunswick, ME

### Penobscot Wherry — A Good Towboat

We had a good TSCA messabout in November at Cortez, Florida, with plenty of wind. I did my first tow job under sail as Roger Allen's Melonseed mast broke. I was impressed with the Penobscot's power under reefed sails with two of us aboard towing Roger and two others along in his Melonseed.

Turner Matthews, Bradenton, FL

## Information of Interest...

### Deepest Draft for Ramps

Bob Zweig's question, "What is deepest draft for launching ramps?" in the January issue is a little bit like asking, "how high is up?" I have done a rather complete survey of ramps between San Diego, Deception Pass, and North Idaho recently. My trailer axle is about 16' from my rear wheels. With the back tires of my truck just at the water's edge, most of the ramps I used on my drive up and down the west coast allowed about 2' at the trailer wheel. My boat has a fixed keel drawing about 26" at her marks. I actually launch this boat when the keel is only wet for about 6". Only about 3' of the hull is even in the water.

I have also done some experimenting with alternatives to tongue extenders, as I think they are neither convenient nor particularly effective.

Here's the deal: Assuming about 1' of water depth in 8' of "backing in," an extension of another 8' (which requires waaaaaay more than that in square tubing and trailer surgery to accomplish) is required to get another 1' of depth. Two problems: some ramps

can end abruptly (especially at low tide) and cause the trailer wheels to drop off the concrete; and more depth isn't actually what is needed. What is needed is for the stern of the boat to start FLOATING sooner.

Unless a deep keel and fixed inboard rudder that could actually impact the ramp are involved another way to achieve more "depth" is to incline the trailer. I got one of those drop-down draw bars designed to allow a jacked up truck to tow a regular height trailer. Only, I put it on upside down. This had the effect of raising the tongue about 6"-8". Presto! The stern floats as if I had actually backed the trailer another 6' or so.

By the way, that ramp just south of Bob's address (Walla Walla) in Umatilla is about the normal proportion. I stopped there on my way from Priest Lake, Idaho to the Cascade Lakes in central Oregon.

Dan Rogers, Chula Vista, CA

### Great Article on Iceboating

Thanks for the great article on ice boating in the January issue. During the 1940s and 1950s I learned to sail (and play in boats) on New Jersey's Navesink River, immediately north of the Shrewsbury River, an epicenter of iceboating at the turn of the (last) century. I remember hearing many tales about iceboating exploits and 100+ mph speeds. Although I recall a couple of winters of decent ice during the mid-'50s, I don't think much of the iceboat era remained in that part of Jersey.

I have often thought of building an iceboat during the past few years but I suspect the snows snuff out much iceboating before the ice is thick enough for boating. Good sailing days



can be few and far between during the summer, a good winter might provide far fewer.

On another subject. I recently met a gentleman who is writing the history of a New Hampshire seacoast town. He mentioned that he was having trouble finding information about a man named Urch who, among other things, built and messed about in a pedal-powered boat more than one hundred years ago.

I recalled a fascinating article in *Messing About in Boats* a couple of years ago about two men who pedaled out the Piscataqua River in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and headed for the Isles of Shoals. Is there any way I could get a copy of that article or at least the date of publication? I would really like to pass the information along to the gentleman writing the town history.

Jeff Hillier, N Hampton, NH

**Editor Comments:** The six-page article, "Paddling on the Piscataqua," an abridged reprint of an 1883 article from the League of New Hampshire Wheelmen magazine, appeared in our June 15, 2005 issue courtesy of reader Kinley Gregg. In her epilog Kinley made mention of a David Urch's design. For those online interested, the unabridged "Pedaling on the Piscataqua" is available in the digital archives of the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles at [www.aaflo.org](http://www.aaflo.org). We sent Jeff a copy of our published version.

### Wind in the Willows Now 100

The other evening PBS here aired a dramatization of *Wind in the Willows*. I came in late and watched the whole show waiting to hear the namesake quotation, "there is nothing, absolutely nothing, half so much worth doing as simply," etc, to no avail! Well nothing would do but to fly to my neighborhood library and check out the book, which the librarian found for me in the Childrens' Section.

Imagine my surprise when I discovered I had borrowed Scribner's Golden Anniversary Edition, printed in 1959! Since the first edition was copyrighted 1908 this means the story recently turned 100 years old. I don't remember seeing this pointed out in *MAIB*, and if it wasn't, maybe now is the time.

I found the famous quotation right on page 6 but kept right on going because it turns out this is quite a good read, especially after having seen the program on PBS. A chapter about Mole experiencing a twinge of homesickness without his even verbalizing that word was very moving to me, as was another where Mole and the Water Rat find the missing Otter Child, and another where Badger attempts an intervention on Mr Toad to keep him off the road! I've saved a few chapters to relish later because for me this is one of those books one hates to see coming to an end.

Thomas Godzicki, Muskegon, MI

## Information Wanted...

### What Happened to Nobska?

What was the final outcome on that long time effort to save that Cape Cod steamboat ferry *Nobska* that you reported on over many years?

R.L. Ellis, Atlanta, GA

**Editor Comments:** I seem to recall that a few years ago the *Nobska* was in the drydock at the Constitution National Park site in Boston awaiting major hull repairs when the money ran out and the dock was needed for work on the *USS Constitution*. She was cut up for scrap at that time.

## Opinions...

### Pity the Poor Powerboaters

This past summer as a result of the \$4 and more gasoline prices for cars, and higher prices yet on the waterfront, a *Hartford Courant* reporter wrote a long, lugubrious article on the plight of the poor powerboat owners and how these gasoline prices were ruining their normal fun trips. He recounted the story of a couple owning a 30' powerboat with two 250hp outboards that burned "only" 30 gallons per hour who were forced to remain at their dock instead of running across the Sound to Greenport on Long Island for lunch or to Block Island for the weekend. I was moved to respond with the following letter (written last June) which the *Courant* chose not to publish:

"Your article in the May 25, 2008 edition concerning the plight of the powerboat owners having to pay \$5 a gallon for gasoline moved me to tears (crocodile type).

The article reported that *Wenweken III* with two 250hp outboards burns 30 gallons per hour "loafing along at 30 mph." Its tanks hold 350 gallons. Now the owners are staying in their marina and not "just running over to Greenport for lunch." I think if they would add about another 20hp they could probably fly to Block Island.

You didn't mention the plight of the poor owners of Cigarettes, Fountains, and such boats, with 1,000hp or more engines. These poor people, many in their upper 50s with Admiral's hats on their heads to show that they are somebody, with about a pound of gold chains around their necks that dance on the gray hairs of their bronzed chests to the movement of their craft, accompanied by their "arm candy" in thongs. Now, they really have something to cry about with the current gas prices. In the past they got from fuel dock to fuel dock at great speed, but at today's fuel prices can they even afford to leave the dock?

Obviously all the marinas are going to be hurting if their steady customers stay home because they can't afford the \$95 to \$190 for fuel that it costs to go to Block Island every weekend.

My sympathy for these dockbound powerboaters is seriously muted by on-the-water experiences I have endured from their antics. One example is two powerboaters who boxed me in the channel inside of Ram Island heading for Noank. It's a narrow channel, we had our sails down and furlled, the engine running, and at six knots were about to head up the Mystic River to Fort Rachel Marina, our home port. My wife, who likes her coffee, had the coffee pot on the galley counter, the Melitta filter was sitting on top of the coffee pot with the coffee measured out and in the filter. She poured in the boiling water, enough for four cups.

At that moment I became aware that two powerboats, going full bore parallel to each other, were going to pass on either side of us in that very narrow channel. I screamed to my wife to hold the Melitta filter but it was too late. The two roared past us too close on either side, the drivers yelling something from their flying bridges to their wives sitting on their back porches, and the wives laughing at the sight of us as we rolled onto our beam ends from their combined wakes.

I, in turn, yelled at my wife to hand me my flare gun, a 12-gauge size pistol as I intended to put a red flare up the exhaust pipe of each of the powerboats, but she dithered... and dithered... until both were well out of

range. Meanwhile the Melitta filter, the hot water, the coffee grounds, and the coffee pot were all rolling around on the cabin sole carpet. Coffee and coffee grounds everywhere. My wife had scald burns from the hot water. I can only hope that such people as these stay tied up to their docks for this whole summer and many more to come.

We began to notice this behavior back in the late '70s when, with sailing friends, we would sail to Block Island where the Great Pond was a peaceful and quiet place. But as more and more power boats were sold, they arrived at the Great Pond in increasing numbers and it became a zoo. Boats arrived with 500watt loudspeakers on their tuna towers. They seemed to assume that the whole anchorage was enthralled to listen to their obnoxious choice of music. Asking them to please turn down the volume didn't help. Turning up our volume so that we could hear Mozart or Vivaldi didn't help either, our music was drowned out.

As a sailor I go out on the water looking for peace and quiet. I don't want to find my boat being used as a slalom pole by high horsepower idiots who, in many cases, haven't a clue that there are such things as Maritime Rules of Navigation. All they seem to know is where to put the ignition key and how to push the throttles forward. I cannot help but feel some relief if now they have to stay on the dock.

This relief comes belatedly in our sailing life, however, as in '92 we'd had enough of these increasingly frequent unpleasant experiences. We sold our big sailboat to get away from the powerboaters and bought a small trailerable sailboat. I am hoping that your newspaper might present our alternative way of boating to your readers.

Our operating costs underway have almost reached \$0. Our 2hp outboard auxiliary burns less than a pint of gasoline an hour, but since we almost always sail, our fuel consumption for a sailing season is probably less than one gallon of gasoline. We have discovered all sorts of new and wonderful places to go with a trailerable sailboat, places that are serene, places where we can be alone, and places where the loudest sound we hear is the cry of a loon or the splash of a bass without a powerboat anywhere around.

So maybe with \$5 a gallon gasoline prices, the powerboaters will stay home because their 500hp (and more) engines will eat them out of house and home. They could have bought boats that operate at displacement speeds and cruise at 8-10kts. A 30' powerboat doesn't need more than about a 40hp diesel, burning about a gallon an hour to achieve this performance. With such they could still afford those trips for lunch or weekend. In a whole sailing season, covering many nautical miles between Boston and New York, our large sailboat probably didn't use 15 gallons of gasoline.

Long may \$5, \$6, or even \$7 a gallon gasoline reign on the water. Hopefully these shocking new economic constraints will bring back some reality to the current high horsepower insanity that exists on our waters. Maybe peace and quiet will reign again at our old haunts. I long for the day when the loudest sounds to be heard might be someone's improperly tied-off halyards that are slapping a mast as the wind rises at midnight in the Great Pond instead of listening to auxiliary generators running all night to supply power to the refrigerator, the blender, the stove, and the color TV.

Conbert H. Benneck, Glastonbury, CT

### The "Best" Way

A comment on "A Look at Propulsion" by David Hagberg: It appears that he is displeased that some of us do things not in the "best" way which, as he says, is usually expensive. I believe that readers of *MAIB* would agree that the "best" way is the one that gets them on the water. If that means a boat built out of AC ply and powered by an old outboard, that's better than looking at the water from shore waiting until one can afford the best.

Bob Slimak, St Anthony Village, NM

## Projects...

### News from the Intermountain West Sailors' Playground

Finally we got the new mold for the Western Lady fantail launch done. Not without a struggle, however. Janis and I laid it up out at the patch without electricity or shade. Now as soon as we get a roof on the new shop (26'x56') we can try laying her up. Better order now for spring delivery. I've been saying that for several years now but it's going to happen.

The other project is not too serious but should be fun. It's the Swooper Duckah. She is a blindingly fast planing boat derived from the A Duckah! The Utah gang has three hulls so we are counting on four at Starvation.

Speaking of which, Steve Case and Tom Gale both had lovely Lil' Pickles at Starvation this year. If I got my two fitted out and the Beltz brought theirs we'd have five. Wow!!

In April we hauled an A Duckah! down to Roger Allen's Cortez meet in Florida. Good to see some old friends sloshing around down there.

Lake Powell was up enough this year so that we could run from Bullfrog to Hite. I use the sailing term "run" advisedly as it was mostly very light air. The paddle people had the edge. Steven fixed up an old Penguin and came along on the Kokopelli to look after me. His boy Tanner has really taken to the Penguin and was sailing his Grandma around at the Delta picnic.

Doug Mows, a refugee from So Cal, was sucked into the fold when he spotted some of my boats from I70. He is now working on fitting out a Livery pulling boat and has a New York Whitehall and the WL plug lined up. Should keep him off the streets for a while.

That's about all the news from that sailors playground, the Intermountain West. Fair winds, straight grain, vintage wine, clear beer, cheap booze, and may your boat never hog.

Jim Thayer, Grand Mesa Boatworks, Colbran, CO

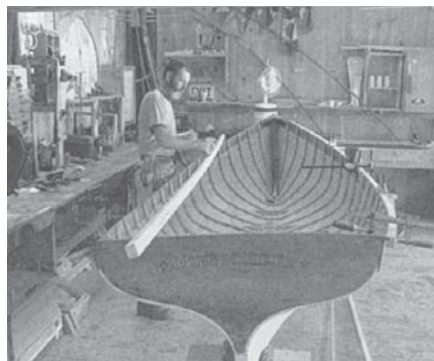
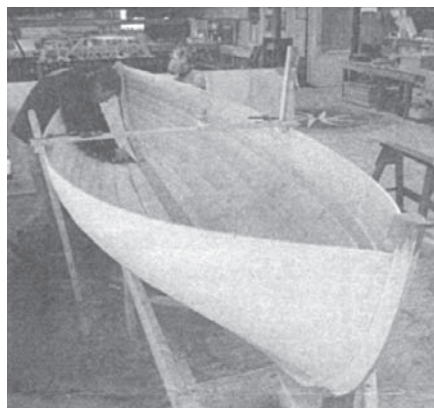
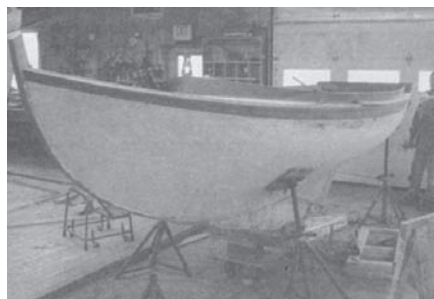
### Ongoing Projects at the Apprenticeshop

Work continued on the restoration of *Reepicheep*, a Moosabec Reach Boat originally built by the 'Shop in 2005. Martin Ryan and Phil Huening finished reframing and worked on painting and refinishing while awaiting instructions for the final sailing rig configuration.

George Sprague and Kat Tychonievich flipped the new 14' Maine Coast Peapod over last fall, removed it from its mold, and prepared to steam-in the white oak frames. George graduated in December, so Kat will be completing the project, including a set of spoon blade spruce oars, in early 2009.

Dylan Pearse-Theroux, Curtis Carlisle, and instructor Brian McClellan are putting the finishing touches on a Herreshoff 12 1/2 replica. Curtis finished attaching the lead keel, Brian fitted the coaming and trim work, and Dylan continued work on the interior.

The Apprenticeshop, Atlantic Challenge, Rockland, ME, atlantichallenge.com



### Bobcat "en Miniature" Follow-up

I finally have had an opportunity to try out the behavior of my radio-controlled model Bobcat (December "You write...") in the water. On a midweek day late in November I received a telephone call from Will Hadden, my innovative young friend who, like myself, had rigged up a small radio-controlled

sailboat. We had agreed that, upon completion, we would try out the boats in a pond here on Georgetown Island. So we settled on the next Sunday when both our "creations" would have their "virgin sail."

Will has a very supportive family. This includes his parents and grandparents. So we met at Charles Pond on Sunday, Will, his boat, his mom, dad, grandma and grandpa, myself and Martha, my spouse and, of course, my boat. The difference between the boats lay in the mode of propulsion, Will's is strictly wind powered with a servo controlling the boom. My catboat's rudder is controlled by a servo, the auxiliary motor by connection to the radio receiver.

So after launching both boats, Will's waited for a puff of wind, mine took off like a herd of turtles past debris and ice floes, down along the pond. There was little wind but with my rudder control I brought her back close to our launching site while Will's boat had drifted off a bit, still waiting for a "puff" of wind. Maneuvering the catboat close to Will's boat required putting the motor in reverse. No problem.

What we saw, however, was that her stern dipped closer to the water surface. The "crew" sat there, stoic as one would expect from that little sculpture, no PFDs but rising water in the cockpit. I quickly brought the catboat close to where I could pull her out of the water. Meanwhile Will had rescued his boat. Here is what had happened.

In order to connect the tiller to the servo, the transom has a sizeable cutout. When I backed up the catboat this opening was close enough to the water to take some onboard. This problem was solved and now she is ready for sailing in 2009.

Hans Waecker, Georgetown Island, ME

### Building a Cruising Rowboat

I'm working now on details for an 18'x4' cruising rowboat. It has decked ends and bulkheads like a sea kayak and a 7' long cockpit raised to 20" height. It is set up to sleep aboard under an easily set up tent. There is storage for about 15 gallons of water giving a ten-day range or 150 miles.

The most interesting aspect is the use of whole molding to get all of the section shapes. One master pattern forms all section curves. I have it lofted and molds set up. Construction awaits warmer weather in my shop here in Anacortes, Washington.

Tom Fulk, Anacortes, WA

## This Magazine...

### Again...Don't Change a Thing

Reading the January issue I see people are still complaining when ALL the articles aren't of interest to them. Continue to do what you have always done and ignore them. Don't change a thing!

Bob Slimak, St Anthony Village, NM

**Editor Comments:** Again I will iterate that while I am happy to publish reader opinions that may not agree with how I do the magazine, this does not mean that I am going to change anything to suit their opinions. I may, I may not. Depends on how I feel about it.



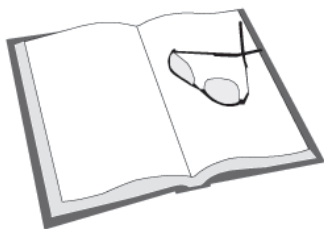
## COMPASS ROSE REVIEW

### "Views and Reviews from the Coast of Maine"

- Boats, books, waterfront life, links
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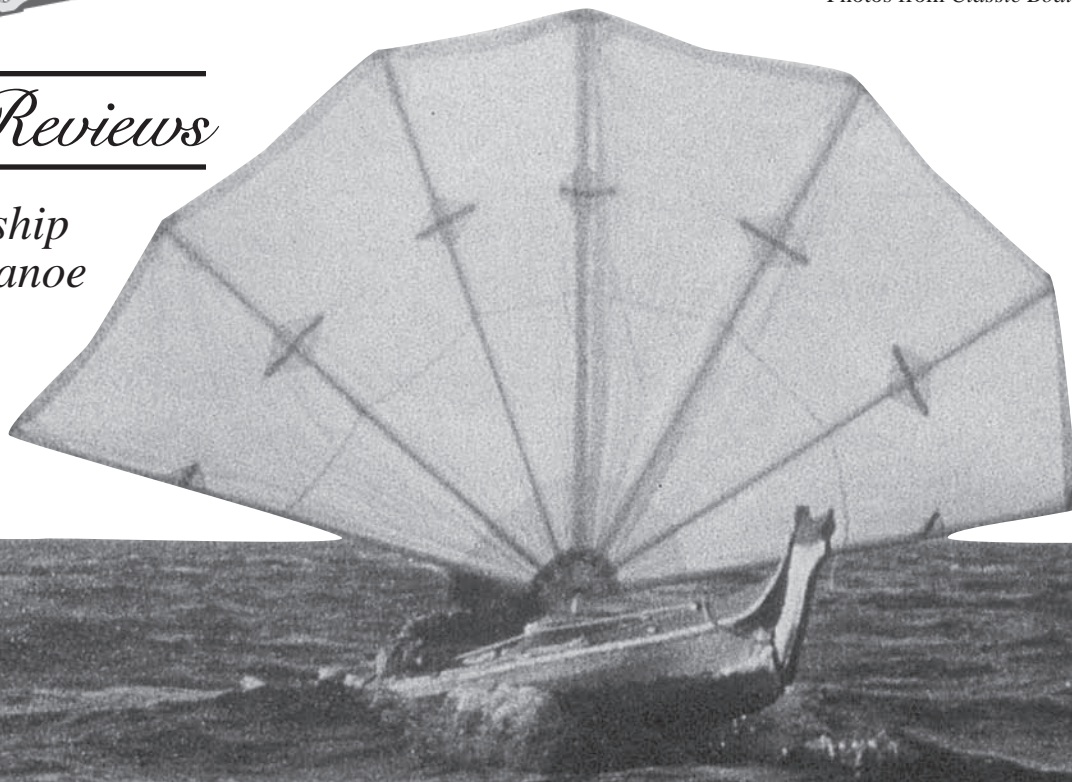
By Kenneth Brower  
Whizzard Press/Andre Deutch, Ltd (1980)  
Reviewed by D. Turner Matthews  
Photos from *Classic Boat*

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## Book Reviews

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### *The Starship and the Canoe*



This book, written by Kenneth Brower (at the time one of the editors of the Sierra Club Series and son of David Brower, founder of Friends of the Earth), is a study in contrast between hyper-technology, as represented by Freeman Dyson, and minimalist technology, as represented by George Dyson, Freeman's son. Freeman Dyson was a principal architect of the theory of quantum electrodynamics and in the late 1950s took a leave of absence from his position at the Institute of Advanced Studies at Princeton. He moved with his family to LaJolla, California, to join 40 other scientists and engineers who were working on "Project Orion." This project was funded to design a spaceship for interplanetary exploration and was to be propelled by external nuclear explosions. Before you judge the insanity (in our present time frame) of this idea, you should know that it was supported by several Nobel laureates (Harold Urey, Niels Bohr, and Hans Bethe) and was respectfully followed by General Curtis LeMay and NASA, which contributed some of the funding.

George Dyson, on the other hand, at the time this book was written was a minimalist. Having been something of a bad boy type, at age 14 he was suspected and ultimately arrested on suspicion of being the main source of marijuana for his school. When he was finally released, after several weeks of incarceration, he was already planning his escape.

He was going to the mountains, away from civilization. While he did not (in this book anyway) admit or deny the charges, he admitted that the fact that his father would leave him in detention for several weeks, for whatever reason, had shaken him, and although George claims that jail was not a bad experience, it marked the end of a major portion of the relationship between him and his father. George spent the next summer at a Sierra Camp in Colorado and the next year, at age 16, he left home for good. In the next five years he saw his father only once. This estrangement and ultimate partial reconciliation is one of the major sections of the book.

Well beyond the time period of this book the "bad boy" has done more than remarkably well, being in present day an esteemed author, designer, and historian of technology. As we all stand here today we are a product of all the experiences of our life to date. Can we attempt to look back and see what influence they had upon us as we presently exist? Certainly. Can we change in any major degree the person we have become as a result of those experiences? To some degree the answer is yes, because by discovering and re-examining those experiences and influences we will admit to we can sometimes change the behaviors they have wrought upon us. I do not know what George Dyson did, if anything, in this regard, but his life appears to have clearly benefited from the experiences

of these early rebellious years as chronicled in this book.

The second premise of this book is a back-and-forth comparison between voyaging in a space craft, traveling through space and colonizing asteroids, versus voyaging in a canoe-type vessel used by the Aleuts to travel the Aleutian Islands and northwest Alaska. That vessel is known as a baidarka. How George Dyson becomes acquainted with and expands the baidarka concept with modern materials is much of what this review of the book is about.

When George left home for good he "attended" the University of California at San Diego. During this time he bought a small sailboat which he found in a marina. Although he knew nothing of sailing, he felt he could both live aboard and learn about boats and how to sail. It was, however, against marina rules to live aboard so he came and went in a very stealthy manner. Brower described this behavior as cryptozoic which biologists now use to describe the life led by raccoons, 'possums, and other wild animals that have adapted to civilization by learning to live secretly alongside it. (To the contrary, Americans at present are reaping the results of their desire to live an anti-cryptozoic life, focused instead on being seen as larger than life. I believe the term was "living large.")

George did not last the semester at UC and, having learned to sail and navigate to

some degree, determined to sail to Hawaii. The author's mother and sister, with whom George was acquainted, were able to dissuade this potentially suicidal mission, both of them believing that George was very disturbed and unhappy and did not much care if he reached Hawaii or not.

Shortly after abandoning his plans for Hawaii he sold the boat and headed north for the coast of British Columbia which was to become his home for the duration of this book. There he joins up with and works on the building and completion of a 48', 20-ton ferro-cement vessel, the *D'Sonoqua*, named after a local demi-diety.

As an example of George's toughness and character, on the day before the initial voyage of the *D'Sonoqua* he was carrying two 70lb pails of steel punchings to be used for ballast and fell between the dock and the boat, his fall stopped short by a bolt which impaled him through his arm. When finally freed he spent the night in plastic surgery and left the hospital at 6:00 the next morning, not wanting *D'Sonoqua* to sail without him.

Because of lack of funds, even though the boat had no interior and had in no way been sea-tested, the owner had booked a paying passage to load five musicians, four assistants, and their equipment in Vancouver and make a round trip of some 600 miles with the intent of performing in concert to an audience of Orcas (killer whales), this being the idea sponsored by Dr Paul Spong, a noted whale researcher then residing near Alert Bay.

The voyage was an apparent success in that the musicians liked the whales and the whales appeared to respond favorably to the music. George's first encounter with the Orcas occurred on a warm August night with all on board asleep but him, who was on anchor watch. He observed a sizeable pod approach and quietly examine the anchored *D'Sonoqua*. "After an unperceived period of time they silently departed, leaving me unsure of the meaning of this visit except that I felt ever different after the touch of their powerful spirit."

George stayed with *D'Sonoqua* for two years as she engaged in coastal trading, supplying goods and groceries out of Vancouver along the British Columbia coast. She voyaged up and down the inside passage, a 900-mile stretch of convoluted coastline filled with deep fiords, gulfs, bays, passages, inlets, and a myriad of mysterious islands. To quote Brower:

"There are several Aegean's worth of islands. Ulysses never had so many archipelagoes to wander in. Anneas met no stranger people, nor did Captain Cook or Flash Gordon. There is the Island of the People Who Sing to Whales. There is the Island of the Indians Who Bury Their Dead Under Singer Sewing Machines. There are logging camps and fishing villages. Hidden away in deep inlets are communes of bearded men and long-haired women. Monasteries of strange religious sects stand inland in the mountains."

As George learned to move in this mixed society he met the people who would become his models, or at the least influence him greatly, people like Dr Paul Spong, the psychologist who became a student of, then famous champion of, killer whales; Michael Berry, a marine biologist who became a fisherman and jack of all trades; an old woman who subsisted on crows and potatoes; and a young man who made his own wooden shoes

and lived in a hammock, wherever the hammock happened to be.

George took much from these two years of experiences and made the determination that the whole coastline was his home. He had learned from his coastal trading how easily society was left behind. Pick up anchor, sail around a point, and he was in the wilderness. George determined to build rooms of his house all up and down the coast and the baidarka was to become his means of transport.

His first semi-permanent dwelling was built 95' above the ground in a Douglas fir tree. It stands on land leased by friends from the provincial government of British Columbia and is the last tree before the water. George built the house in 1972, the same year his father was lecturing on comets and the hospitality of interstellar space. The author had this to say about the structure:

"The house is lashed to the tree, not nailed, for the treetop sways in the wind and the attachments must be flexible to endure. George has confidence in the lashings. In 1975 the worst storm in many years hit British Columbia and George, who had been living elsewhere, moved back into his tree to see how a big storm felt. The storm did its best, the tree whipped wildly about, George fell asleep."

There is much more information in the book concerning the house, too much to try to review but enough to suggest to me that I urge you read the book as this portion alone makes it interesting and enjoyable. I recall a response to one of Walt Donaldson's early writings published by this magazine. One reader wrote inquiring with personal questions about how he handled certain bodily functions. The answer was not forthcoming from Walt, but Brower says the following about George in his tree house:

"Like Thoreau, George is a bean eater. When George's body is entirely finished with the beans he has eaten, or the brown rice, or fish or sprouts, he rappels down the tree and disappears briefly in the forest. In nature he answers nature's call. Sometimes, when it's raining hard or when he just doesn't feel like making the trip to earth, he selects a red-cedar shingle, uses it, then sails it like a Frisbee out over the canopy trees."

I can tell you, as an aside, that Walt Donaldson knows his way around a Frisbee.

Where then, does the baidarka come to play in this book? It starts in Chapter 16, page 70, with a discussion of the various types of vessels used for transport by the Indians of this region. Haida paddlers, for instance, stroked with such power that they could allegedly, with much churning of the water, lift their war canoes entirely out of the water. According to the author, George was impressed but was drawn temperamentally to craft of less splash. According to the author:

"The dugouts of the Northwest coast were fine boats but a canoe of a more silent and seaworthy design sometimes glided down into the Inside Passage... Northwest of Glacier Bay in Alaska where the inside passage ends, Eskimo country begins and the dugout gives way to the skin boat. The Eskimos and their cousins, the Aleuts, were a rude people compared to the sculptors and carpenters of the inside passage, but they were better seamen. They had no system of inland fjords, no bulwark of seaward archipelagoes to protect them from the North Pacific.

They ventured into that moody storm-breeding sea in canoes that could be

carried under one arm. Made of animal skin stitched over wood or bone frames, Eskimo boats were simple, easy to repair, shock resistant, beautiful, and fast. Eskimo umiaks, large open vessels, carried tremendous loads and as many as 40 people. Eskimo kayaks, slender and nearly weightless, were the finest hunting canoes in history. Skin boats made the Eskimo culture circumpolar, extending its reach over the northernmost coasts of Asia, America, and Greenland.

The oars of the umiaks and the double-bladed paddles of the kayaks chopped down vast distances, allowing Eskimos to exchange ideas, designs, and genes all around the top of the world. A Greenland Eskimo could follow, haltingly, the speech of an Eskimo from Western Alaska. When a Tsimshian addressed a Nootka he might as well have been speaking Chinese or Kwakwaka'wakw.

In response to this general study of the origins of West Coast canoes, George had this to say, which led him into his creation and modernization of the baidarka:

"It was the use of the light seagoing canoe," he writes, "which once enabled people to live and travel throughout this coastline instead of in the present pattern of centralization at the few areas offering facilities for modern transport and communication. I could see that this previously extinct manner of travel was the one which offered me a chance for the closer contact I sought to establish with this coast and I began to accumulate all available information on canoe travel throughout the world's history.

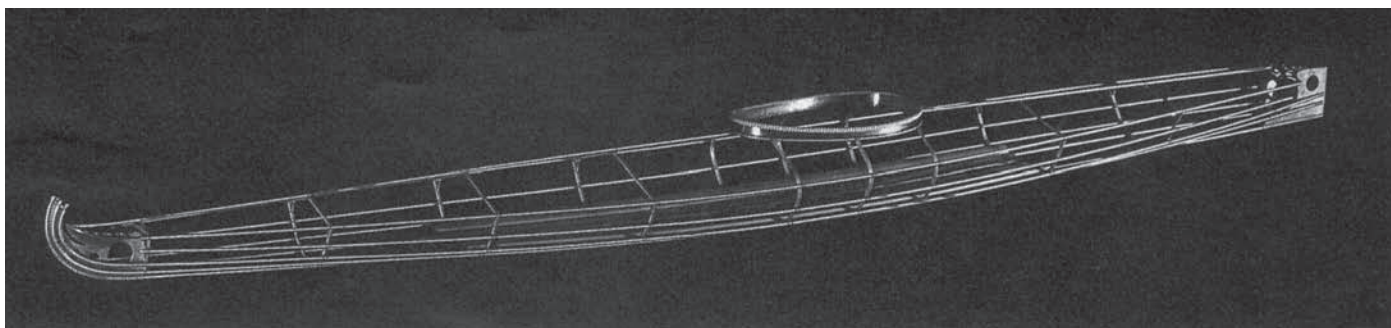
The canoe must be fast in order to deal with strong tidal currents and to make the greatest use of this coast's limited periods of predictable and favorable conditions for crossing long stretches of open water. It must be as light as possible in order to be easily propelled in the water and carried safely ashore in the many areas where no anchorage or shelter for heavy craft exists. If it is inherently stable without ballast or keel it may survive heavy weather at sea by being tossed harmlessly out of the way of large breaking waves, avoiding the heavy-keeled draft's habit of remaining tragically fixed at the advance of a destructive mass of water...

It was necessary for me to consider all possible materials and methods and make the compromises which occur between ideal design and practical technique. The form I had in mind had much in common with those developed by the Aleuts and Eskimos and I studied their adaptable and efficient pattern of construction involving a light flexible frame covered with a tough waterproof skin. It was this combination of independently flexible frame and skin which enabled their otherwise light craft to withstand the stresses of the stormy, shallow, and ice-filled northern seas."

George, after much further study, chose to build his first kayak on the same basis, adopting their highly evolved methods to presently available and superior materials. He used aluminum tubing lashed strongly but flexibly together to form a frame which he covered with a waterproof and durable skin of laminated glass-reinforced polyester resin, not dissimilar to some methods of building aircraft. His first kayak built in this manner was 16' long, modeled on a kayak from Nunivak Island.

George's Bible, when it comes to skin boats, is *The Bark Canoes and Skin Boats of North America* by Chapelle and Adney. His





A baidarka skeleton made from aluminum tubing and old road signs.

first kayak's lines were copied directly from the book, Figure 184, a Nunivak Eskimo vessel. George's version proved tipsy, and, at the time the book was written, he was embarrassed by it. He was still using it for short errands, however, and Brower noted not a single dent from a career of rough use on stony beaches. He began looking for a better model. What he found from Chapelle and others was that the best of Alaskan kayaks were made by the Aleuts and they handled them better than anyone in the world.

According to Brower, the Aleuts were master kayakers out of necessity because the Aleutian Islands have one of the dreariest climates on earth. They had only the cruel sea from which to gather food, aside from a few edible plants, nesting birds, and bird eggs. They went to sea in their skin-covered craft armed with an arsenal of sinew-backed bows, bone-tipped arrows, dart throwers, spear throwers, bolos, harpoons, bird spears, and lances.

Using these, with well-developed hunting skills and their remarkable seagoing baidarkas, they brought back seals, sea lions, sea otter, sea cows, whales, and numerous species of birds. They fished for halibut and cod with 150-fathom lines braided from the stalks of giant kelp. They paddled over the horizon regularly and on purpose. They made trips to the Kamchatka Peninsula in Asia (much further than Governor Palin can see from her house). According to Brower, it may be that the Aleut racial divergence from the Eskimo is because of intermarriage with Kamchatka natives.

The anthropological aspect of this portion of the book is detailed and complete, sufficient unto itself for a separate review. However, the book and this review is about George Dyson's adaptation of all this fascinating information to build his own version of an Aleut baidarka.

To quote Brower: "George's materials are space-age but his baidarka remains an Aleut canoe. The whitewater kayaks made of fiberglass or molded plastic that are sold in stores are not Aleut or Eskimo canoes, having departed from the organic analogy-independent skeleton within a waterproof epidermis. Their forerunner is not the sea lion but the beer can."

In regard to his use of fiberglass George has this to say: "Fiberglass is used normally as a structural membrane. Not in my canoe. My canoe is not really a fiberglass boat. It's a boat with a waterproof membrane of fiberglass. The strength of this fiberglass is tensile, in the fibers. Fiberglass fails when compressive stress is exerted on it. In my canoe fiberglass takes the tensile loads and aluminum takes the compressive loads."

Insofar as other material differences exist, while the Aleuts lashed their frames to-

gether with sinew or twisted gut, George uses nylon; rather than a skirt of intestines laced to the bottom of the manhole ring and fitted at the top with drawstrings, George uses nylon skirts with elastic, top and bottom. The Aleuts went to sea with repair kits of animal fat that they smeared over leaky seams, while George goes to sea with a repair kit of fiber patches, resin, and catalyst.

He did add two ideas to his first baidarka, sails, which may have been used by the Aleuts, but his gunter lug sails are certainly a departure from Eskimo and Aleut tradition. They are only 40sf, however, which is sufficient to move the baidarka as fast as he wants to go, and when there is no wind he takes them down and sticks them in a manhole. He did add one sure innovation, that being a rudder which is controlled by a set of reins that runs the length of the baidarka on either side of the manholes, thus letting the boat be steered from any position.

George chose as his first baidarka a three-hole model, which is not shown in Chapelle and Adney's book. It is likely that the model was suggested by the Russians who appeared in the Aleutians in the late 1700s. After 40 years of their virtual enslavement of the Aleuts for fur hunting in three-man baidarkas, the Aleuts were reduced to two thousand, Steller's sea cow had vanished, and the sea otter was on the verge of extinction.

According to Brower: "It was not from any admiration of this savage history that George picked the three-man baidarka. It was that he, like the Russians, needed better carrying capacity. Theirs was for furs, his was for the supplies that would make his baidarka a traveling canoe. In George, idealism and pragmatism mix unpredictably. He was untroubled by the ghosts of Aleut slaves in the manholes in front and back of him."

I have mentioned earlier George's toughness and character so it should not be a surprise that for the first real test of his baidarka he chose to go against all the rules and traverse the Yuculta Rapids, which are a notorious narrows between Sonora Island and the mainland, at full tide. He was dropped off there by *D'Sonoqu* and at sunset, with a full moon rising, he set off alone.

Quoting Brower: "The rapids come upon you like the rapids of a river. First there's the sibilance, distant and ominous. Then the roar. Then your last preparations and then that becalmed, full empty, suspended moment in which you wait for the current to seize you. The first ripples advance, not slow, not fast, then the canoe's bow passes over the lip and swings into the stream. Speed picks up. Quickly you're moving fast, as if somewhere ahead a drain plug has been jerked. In Yuculta Rapids the canoe, accelerating, exhilarating, no way to turn around or get, races down

to where the silver river, and everything on it, disappears into the dark mountains.

Instead of vanishing into some tunnel the current, at the last moment, turns hard left, divides, and sweeps through two gaps in the foothills. The river runs smooth, disguising its speed and turbulence. The canoe spins inexplicably this way and that, as if its needle tips were magnetized by water friction. Eddies pass the canoe along to tide rips which entrust it to whirlpools which deposit it in brief slick oasis of color. George dervished downstream. The moon shone on the turbulence and killer whales and porpoises hunted around him. The cetaceans like the rapids because the fishing at the meeting of the currents is good. The baidarka swam as easily, almost, as the sea mammals.

George knew where the bad whirlpools were and he pulled away with his double paddle. His fear departed. He had reached the midpoint of the rapids when it got dark. He hauled out on a moss covered rock and spent the night there, excited, hardly sleeping at all."

For the next two days he worked his way against the wind through Cordero Channel, then Wellbore Channel, and then past Whirlpool Rapids. When he finally reached Johnstone Strait, where passages open up, the wind changed to a strong southeaster, blowing against the tide and setting up big breaking waves. George raised his sails for the first time. "I was scared to death," he says. "I didn't know what my boat would do in these big waves. Everyone had told me I'd never survive some of these places." Everyone was wrong, though. The baidarka covered 40 miles that morning. It was, as conceded by George, "a great moment." "At that point I had a canoe to travel in. Until the sails worked, it was just a big kayak."

As George set out on his baidarka travels he relearned the things the Aleuts had known for centuries. Most of that knowledge had passed from human experience but each day in the baidarka revived a little more of it. "I was free to seek the safety and comfort of solid ground wherever the slightest open beach or protected cove permitted the landing of my canoe, yet was also free to travel long distances in comfort, speed, and freedom from concern for mechanical systems." According to George, a canoe traveling through fog, darkness, or storm needs no fancy navigational equipment to perceive and avoid danger, only the alert human senses of sight, sound, and smell are needed.

In the summer of 1973 George spent a week investigating the inlets and islands north of Hanson Island. At the end of that week the wind turned against him and began to blow briskly from the north. Not wishing to fight the wind (my wife once created a draw-

ing entitled "It is Easier to Ride the Horse in the Direction it is Going"), he turned around, raised sail, and in a single long day traveled 80 miles back to Hanson Island.

The next day begins a side trip of which there are too many to comment upon in this review. This one is worth noting, however. While passing time in a pub at Alert Bay (an Indian town near Hanson) waiting for the mail, he was joined by a man in cowboy boots and cowboy hat who sat down beside him. His name was Carol Martin. This was a far way from the uniform of the day (cork boots and wool caps) and George, his inhibitions subdued by the beer, started up a conversation with him.

As it turned out they had met before in Colorado when the cowboy (Carol Martin) was a hunting guide in the Rockies and George was a pot washer there. He was waiting for a diesel part for his tugboat. The tug, Martin said, was towing a barge full of hay, cows, and horses bound for Alaska where he planned to start a new ranch and a new life. Ever quick to seize an opportunity to earn some money, George offered to charter *D'Sonoqua*, which had just arrived in port, for less than the bush pilot price to deliver the cowboy and the part (when it arrived) back to the disabled tugboat. As it turned out Martin also needed someone who knew about boats and he invited George to come along and help him finish the trip to Juneau.

George apparently thought about it briefly and, according to Brower, realizing that Juneau was somewhere near Glacier Bay whose deep inlets were the very last of the Inside Passage and was thus the "roof" of his 900-mile house, he agreed to go.

"It was a weird change," he says. "One day I'm in my canoe going south. The next day I'm heading north in a barge full of animals. I'm doing the chores. I've never done chores before. I had to feed and water the animals... The barge was beautiful, though. It was Colorado. You'd walk around and smell the hay."

The barge itself was 110' long and 45' wide. It carried three cows, six horses, 25 tons of hay, 6,000 gallons of water, a pickup truck, a 60' house trailer, enough lumber for a house, and tons of food and gear. It was, in fact, Martin's Ark. The barge and mini tug were an extreme case of some of what George had seen on the inside passage. He had often seen them pass happily by on the flood tide, then pass again on the ebb tide, going backward.

"The tug was meant for pulling a couple of logs around a harbor and here it was towing a 100' barge. Underpowered isn't even the word. It could hardly move against the tide. We made four knots in a dead calm... For me, it was interesting because I had to use all the skill I'd learned with my canoe. We had to play the tides and winds."

The voyage continued, however, using the truck (they had no winch) to control the towline. Then they lost reverse gear on the tug in Prince Rupert Sound. After that, when landing at various stopping points they had to aim the barge at the dock, unfetter the tug away, and pray that the speed and trajectory were right. The dock was supposed to capture the barge much as Jupiter might have captured the Orion Spaceship George's father was working on. They had, however, no computer to figure the angles. "That's how we shook up the cannery."

Gliding into the dock at Petersburg the barge rammed the cannery building. The windows filled instantly with the frightened faces of the workers there. According to Brower George still winces when he relates the event. "Nobody has seen anything like it since. People still talk about it on the coast. It was the most haywire operation I've ever been a part of."

The expedition made precarious progress, almost losing everything on several occasions. George kept his baidarka loaded with his possessions, ready to depart on a moment's notice. Despite it all they finally arrived in Juneau. George remained with the expedition for another six weeks building stalls and otherwise helping Martin. When there was nothing left to do he decided to resume his northwestern voyage.

As George contemplated the immediate future during his explorations of Glacier Bay, he determined to build another room of his house in Tarr Inlet, a place described variously by writers and explorers there as "austere, chaotic, silent, cold, gloomy, desolate, and primeval." It was, however, too late in the season to begin his house. He stored his baidarka under a building at the National Park Headquarters at Glacier Bay and worked his way south to his tree house crewing on a tiny salmon seiner and spent the winter working on plans for canoes.

The next April George rode the ferry up to Alaska, sleeping steerage on deck. On arriving he found his baidarka had survived without a scratch. He had only to clean it up

and sponge out the bottom a little. He was ready to begin the house in Tarr Inlet.

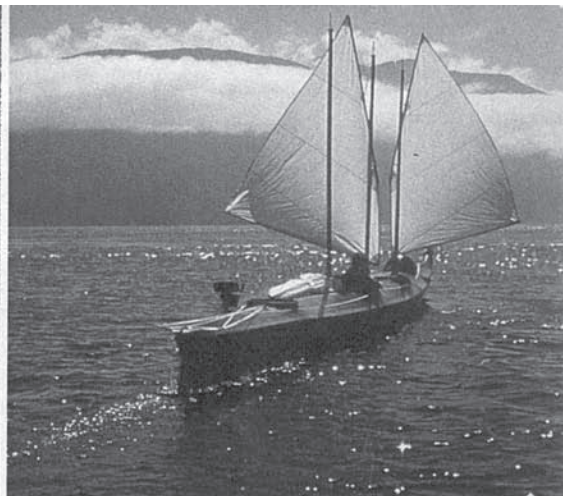
This plan was not to be, however, as his life took another sudden turn. The staff at Glacier Bay had become fascinated by George and his baidarka and wanted to find a way to use it as a research vessel. They offered George a job as cook and baidarka transport for a scientific expedition. Given that George would need good park service relations for what he planned at Tarr Inlet, as well as money for his canoe projects he had conjured up over the winter, he accepted. The summer's research was to take place in Torch Bay, a small fjord on the outer coast of Glacier Bay Monument.

George set off in his baidarka, carrying as passenger a ranger who was to be dropped off en route. When he arrived at Torch Bay he was joined by Ned Gillette who was to be the camp manager. There was not a single trace of there ever being any human use or habitation, save the small, sawed-off stump of a Sitka spruce. Together they built the camp to await the arriving scientists. What follows is a deep look into George Dyson as he reacts to the steady incursion into and increasing influence on the area of more and more human habitation. This is based upon the personal observation of the author who arrived at Torch Bay with the first scientist. George resigned from the research station prior to the end of the season and, after an uncertain waiting period, left in his baidarka, headed south with the author as crew.

The trip back south to Ketchikan is well described by Brower. It captures the grandeur, the isolation, and the total dependence you have to have on yourself and crew if you are to travel some 450 miles down the coast of Alaska in a 31' fiberglass skinned boat that is only 31" wide. Much is revealed of George as they encounter whales and other sea life and forage for food when they run short of rations.

Brower left the baidarka in Ketchikan. George continued south, hitching a ride for a bit with an old Indian in a salmon seiner. When they reached George's home water around Hanson Island he thanked his benefactor and resumed paddling. He had determined to visit Hanson Island where his friend Paul Spong lived. When he entered the cove where Spong's house was, as later related to Brower, he was greeted by a pod of killer whales, 20, maybe more. They blew and

*Mount Fairweather* with full crew underway by paddle power and, when the wind's right, by sail power.





jumped all around him. They let him know he was home.

George's story returns about a year later. He had, during the year, begun construction of his ultimate voyaging canoe to be named *Mount Fairweather*. It was being built in a shed he had constructed near his tree house. As seen by the author, who first describes the shed and its surroundings:

"It was the biggest kayak in history... It was 48' long yet not quite 5' wide... The canoe was composed almost entirely of the three most common elements in the earth's crust, oxygen, silicon, and aluminum. It was an abbreviated version of the planet itself. It was both more and less than it seemed. It contained just 200 pounds of aluminum, 300 pounds of glass and resin, 200 pounds of plywood and nylon string, and 160 pounds of spruce planking, yet these were spun into a cocoon of great strength. The six manholes were arranged with single holes, fore and aft, and two pairs of holes, side by side in the middle.

"It's totally new," George told Brower. "It's a new kind of consciousness. If the space-ships were to come and they want a specimen of intelligent life, this is what they'll take."

George had begun the canoe in the late summer of 1974, shortly after he had returned to Hanson Island from Torch Bay, precipitated perhaps by the serendipitous discovery of a perfect Sitka spruce, wind fallen, on the island. With the help of a friend and an Alaskan chainsaw mill, he chain sawed it into planking for the floor of the canoe. The actual building of the canoe is well described and amazing as George had no outside help of any consequence except for the lashing, of which there was 12,000'.

Once the frame was finished George covered it with unbleached cotton, sewing the sheets together. The job went much more quickly than expected and was finished in two days. He went to attend to some other business and the canoe sat there white, as in the purity of winter. While George was gone an artist friend stopped in to see him. "He saw all that stretched canvas and he couldn't resist." The artist painted the decks and sides with designs in the manner of the Northwest Indians. When George returned he was at first angry, but then

began to like them. He noticed blank spaces in the design, which to George cried out for his own signature. He mixed his paints and added a crab and a flounder in a simple, cheerful manner. Having done this, George felt much better about the mural.

*Mount Fairweather* was to be launched on June 21, 1975, the summer solstice. A month after that George and his father were to be reunited, both men having decided they were long overdue for that. The big canoe was the vessel that would convey George there, both physically and psychically.

George's mother and sister Katrina flew in for the launch. The scene of launch day, which was at first lost under the whiteness of rain clouds, turned bright and propitious and the people gathered, there being 50 or more celebrants by early afternoon.

Brower describes the scene: "The hair was long, both on men and women. Most of the men were bearded. There were plaid shirts in quiet colors and embroidered smocks. There was much wool and unbuttoned raingear. Some people came in bare feet and some came booted. There were several babies in crocheted carriers, slung Indian style against their mother's breasts. Children old enough to walk did so very freely, and several dogs explored with them. Somehow it was never noisy. Even the dogs were well-mannered, showing polite interest in one another. George's people made a gentle tribe. There was wine and beer and several joints circulated but no one partook heavily. The people had the canoe today, and the summer solstice, and a rainless afternoon in British Columbia. None of these required artificial aids to appreciation."

As the celebration wound down after a successful launch and rides for all, Brower poured himself a cup of wine and walked down for a twilight look at *Mount Fairweather*. A red-haired boy of about nine was sitting on a drift log above the canoe, alone with it. He had posted himself like a guard. "Did George ask you to watch it?" Brower inquired. "I wanted to watch it," he replied. "I sat down on the other end of his log and together we watched the great canoe."

Shortly after the launch Brower drove to LaJolla, California, where Freeman Dy-

son (having moved back to Princeton) was attending a symposium, at the conclusion of which he would drive him back to his reunion with his son.

The reunion did occur and Freeman traveled in *Mount Fairweather* with George, his daughter Emily, and Brower from Swanson Island, where the canoe was being kept on a mooring, to Hanson Island, where George had prepared a camp for his guests. The subtle interactions and events which occupied the five-day visit cannot be effectively condensed into a review. Rather, please read it yourself and reach your own conclusions.

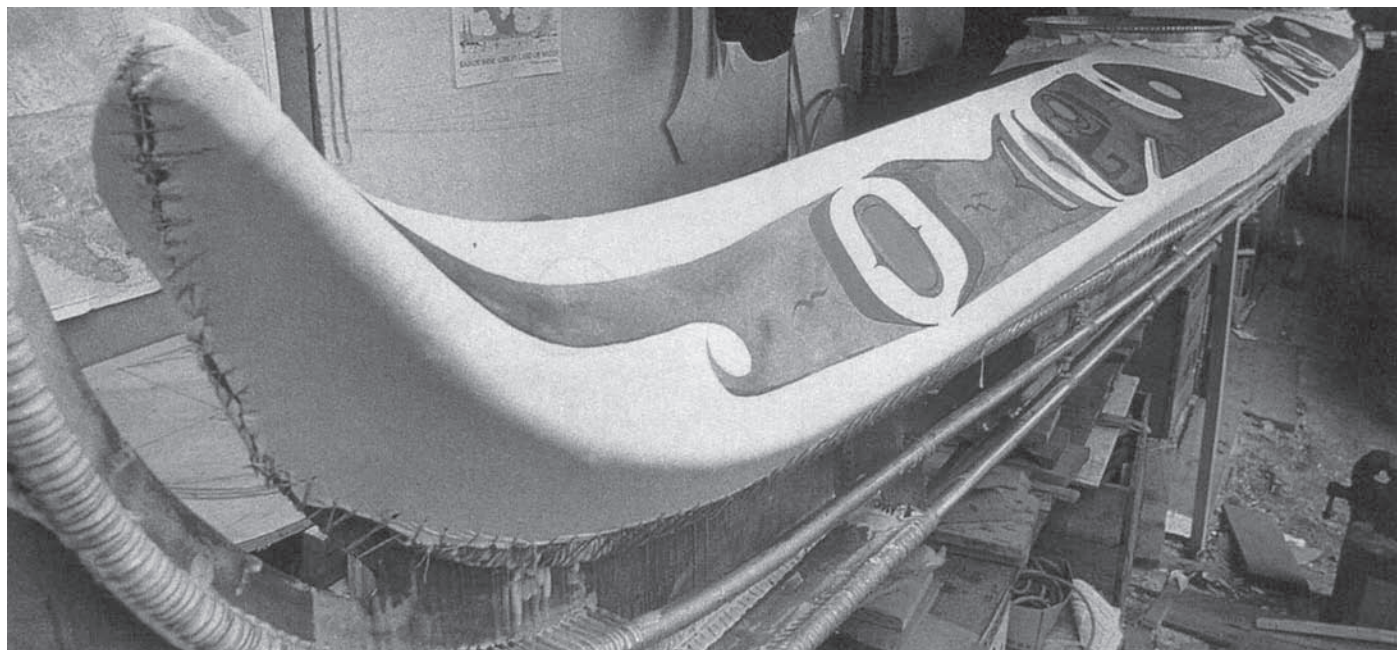
The last day of the visit George and Freeman found space alone and talked for two hours. George told Freeman his plan for life. Seeing the world as a sick and endangered system and himself as a sort of leucocyte afloat in it, his purpose would be to clean it up, in part by example. According to Brower, Freeman told him that those two hours of talk were just what they needed.

Two quotations perhaps sum up Freeman's experiences. "These past five days have been wonderful." "He's (speaking of George) certainly a strong personality. He's far more like my father than me. It definitely skipped generations."

A year later the big canoe was headed north once more with Brower and his brother John as crew. They had no destination, only north. *Mount Fairweather* had changed as George's conception continued to evolve. She was now a trimaran, having had 28' fiberglass outriggers added to each side, joined to the hull by platforms of blond spruce. He had replaced the three wooden masts with a collapsible aluminum A-frame mast with a single large sail of his own design. The canoe had lost its Aleut pedigree but George had never intended to do any more than develop a large sea voyaging canoe based upon the classic Aleut concepts.

The waves at this moment were the largest *Mount Fairweather* had encountered. As the canoe sped forward, humming, occasionally half burying an outrigger or the dragon's head at the prow smashing into a wave sending spray over the canoe, George sat in the rear manhole, steering, alert, and waiting for

Artist Steward Marshall could not resist all that white cotton canvas.



something to break. Nothing did but George chose not to push his luck any further. He told Brower to steer while he crawled forward, lowered the big mainsail, and put up the twin storm sails.

"Crawling back in the gathering dusk he paused on hands and knees beside my hole. He let a big sea chase past us, waiting for a smaller one. I didn't look at him but I could feel his fear. The fear was a routine part of his day and it was under control, but I knew it was there. It came off him like the smell of damp wool. The 10' crawl back to his man-hole was narrow and wet, with nothing to hang on to. If we lurched and he fell in, there was no way to turn back for him. The wind was too strong to paddle against. The water was too cold. The sea was tossing too wildly to find him in.

I remembered a scene from the movie *2001*, a film for which Freeman Dyson had served as a consultant. It was the scene where the doomed astronaut tumbles off into eternal space. The sea around us was nearly as black now as that black between the stars. The water was nearly as cold. Lost in the strait, George would have been as absolutely irretrievable. I decided I would just wave goodbye to him. Some kind of salute. Then the sea settled for a moment and George scuttled back safely to his hole."

The night came on, *Mount Fairweather*, now under control, still sailed northward. Running without lights, they sailed cryptozologically up the middle of the strait.

"I looked back for George. He was still there, sitting in silhouette against the following sea. I could not make out his face. I looked ahead. The earth had vanished in darkness. The only proof of the planet was the ghostly froth of the near waves. George's dragon prow pranced onward into a sea of stars."

#### Reviewer's Comments

I realize that several of the book reviews, including this one, which I have written for this publication, exceed the boundaries of what a "normal" book review might be. However, giv-



Fanlike sail for downwind relief from paddling.

en that several of the books I have reviewed are out of print, even though available at reasonable prices from online booksellers, I realize that the likelihood of a reader searching the internet and purchasing one is slim. I, therefore, write the review more as a story which, hopefully, will give the reader a more interesting article than a standard academic book review.

I would like to note that this review focused only on the maritime aspect of the book. At least a third of the book discusses Freeman Dyson and his opinions and dramatic views of space exploration and colonization. Those portions are every bit as interesting as the portion I wrote about, but did not fit with the small boat theme of this publication.

#### Epilogue: About the Dysons

Freeman Dyson is now retired, having been for most of his life a professor of physics at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. Significant information about his life is available at [www.sns.ias.edu/~dyson/](http://www.sns.ias.edu/~dyson/).

George Dyson, now 55, is considered a scientific historian. He continues to design and build baidarka-style kayaks in Belling-

ham, Washington. In 1986 he wrote his own book about baidarkas, *Baidarka the Kayak*, 1986 Alaska Northwest Books, as well as *Darwin Among the Machines*, 1998 Allan Lane Science, and *Project Orion, The Atomic Spaceship 1957-1965*, Allan Lane Science, 2002. For further information and current photos, just search George Dyson on the internet.

#### Editor Comments

I read George's *Baidarka, the Kayak* in 1991 and was so taken with this spectacular book, not only for its content but for its large scale, full color depiction of all he had to say and do, that I sent for his plans for the 24' two hole baidarka and the special industrial grade nylon skin fabric and hull sealants. They still sit in my boatshed as I lacked the drive to pursue the project in the direction I so much admired. Now it's too late.

I reviewed George's book in the June 15 issue and am reprinting it here to supplement Turner's look at Brower's book, which I also read when I discovered *Baidarka, the Kayak*.

## Kayaks of Greenland

### The History and Development of the Greenland Hunting Kayak 1600-2000

Reviewed by Tony Ford  
Reprinted from *Paddlers Past*, Journal of the Historic Canoe & Kayak Association

This is a most scholarly work by Harvey Golden. The ancestors of the modern Greenlanders have inhabited the island and used kayaks there for one thousand years following their eastward migrations. During these one thousand years kayak designs have changed in response to further migrations to lower latitudes, a changing climate, and cultural influences, mainly European.

Harvey Golden's book documents the broad diversity of kayak types from Greenland as well as their history, development, function, construction, and how the various types relate to each other. The author has studied over 100 Greenland kayaks in museums and private collections and brought his research together in a well-illustrated volume of 580 pages, highlighting the trends and variations of Greenlandic kayaks over the last 400 years.

Harvey's experience and research goes beyond the studies in a museum context, he has built and used 18 full-size replicas of the kayaks in his study, supplementing his understanding of how these kayaks were constructed and how they perform on the water.

Perhaps the most important result of Harvey's study has been to carry the work of Hornell, Petersen, Porsild, and Birket-Smith a step further. Information on these kayaks has been collated in one volume and details of the 100 or so kayaks analysed. The result is that kayak typology has been further refined and Harvey has divided the Greenland kayaks into 13 distinct types. There are, of course, problems with such a typology in that it must span a number of centuries of kayak use and it is more than probable that a number of types no longer exist.

The outline study of the various types of kayak are covered in one relatively short chapter of ten pages, whereby the descriptions of the 13 types covers over 360 pages, so detailed is this study. In addition to details of the kayaks themselves, Greenland paddles are covered as is the question of Greenlanders having reached Europe by kayak and a primer for gathering offsets and lofting kayaks for design analysis or replication.

This book, which is priced \$US69, is not only essential reading for anyone interested in

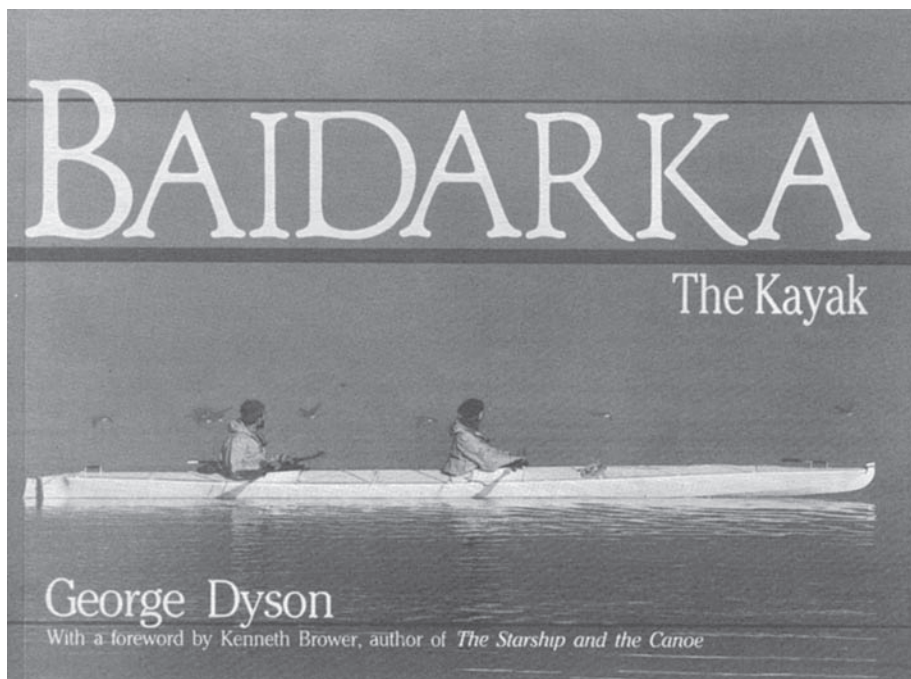
Arctic kayaks but should be part of the enthusiast's library. There is a good bibliography but I do wonder whether the index is sufficient to meet the needs of those who wish to carry out further studies into Greenland and other Arctic kayaks. The book is printed by White House Grocery Press (ISBN 09787221).



Kayak scene from the Franklin expedition, most likely on the Baffin Island coast, but more likely of Copper Eskimo hunting caribou.

(Readers interested in learning more about the Historic Canoe & Kayak Association and their journal should contact: Tony Ford, Am Kurpark 4, 37444 St Andreasberg, Germany; tel +49-5582 619, email [tford@web.de](mailto:tford@web.de))





Reprinted from *MAIB* June 15, 1991

The picture of the cover of George Dyson's *Baidarka* that heads this page is larger than usually run for a book review because the book itself has a scale and scope that is somehow larger than usual for a special interest book. To begin with, the 8½"x11" soft cover book is printed with the 11" as its width, and when opened to one of the breathtakingly beautiful color photos within a two-page image spreads out a full 22", capturing the essence of the scene depicted much as the advent of wide screen movies did. Kayaks lend themselves to horizontally oriented photos and even the full page photos are impressive. Exactly 100 color photos grace the 232 pages of this book, many full-page or two-page spreads.

But this is not just a lovely picture book. Dyson's breadth of vision is equal to the layout of the book and the ambiance established by the spectacular photography. George became enamored of the early watercraft of the Aleuts, studied up on the history of Russian America when Alaska was part of Russia, and after absorbing all of this in his tree house 95' up in a Douglas fir overlooking Vancouver, British Columbia, decided to build a modern-day counterpart of what the Russians had described in the early years of the 19th century as "the best means yet discovered by mankind to go from place to place."

Dyson is the son of a physicist who chose to go his own way. His father was obsessed with a dream of designing a spacecraft the size of Chicago to take mankind to the far reaches of space, not a science fiction fantasy but a technically feasible (if overwhelmingly costly) scheme he devoted much of his life to pursuing. That he failed was due mostly to the need for the support and help of many others in so large a project. His son chose something simpler, yet complex in its origins, the Aleut baidarka, the sea hunting kayak of the Aleuts of the Pacific Northwest. But George had some of his father's scale of vision for his first major effort at building a modern-day baidarka was the *Mount Fairweather*, no less than 48' long, twice the length and eight times the volume of the largest Aleut baidarkas.

This book tells the story of the pursuit of this obsession. It is divided into three main sections. "A Chain of Events, 1732-1933" chronicles the history of the Aleut baidarka, chiefly from records of the early Russian traders who press-ganged the Aleuts into mass hunting of the sea otter at sea for its pelt. Many early illustrations accompany this historical perspective introductory section.

"Frame of Mind, 1972-1977" describes the building of the *Mount Fairweather*, which George entitled "A Necessary Monster," and the follow-up building of a fleet of six 28' three-hole baidarkas in which George and companions set sail (sail was used as well as paddle) retracing the old Aleut baidarka routes along Alaska's Inside Passage.

"In Alliance with the Past, 1983-1985" describes the creation and building of a 24' two-hole baidarka and the development of Dyson's unique construction techniques.

Dyson's writing style is very enjoyable with overtones of old-fashioned formality riding along on a pragmatic discourse about the hurdles encountered in pursuing so unique a dream essentially alone. Dyson is a loner if his writing is any indication, independent in thought and in lifestyle with an impressive amount of discipline that carries him forward on his quest. I was caught right up in the second and third parts of the book; the introductory history was interesting but more pedestrian in reading as it marched on through the years recording the development of the baidarka. Once into his personal experiences the narrative takes wings.

The baidarka's essential mystique is that it was developed and built by aboriginals to cope with hunting sea animals in a very intimidating sea environment. The evolution created a skin, bone, and wood vessel that was incredibly fast and facile at its work. Many early European explorers spoke of being overtaken by two-man baidarkas at sea while making six knots or more under sail. The design development from harsh experience over generations produced a boat of amazing grace and effectiveness made from animal parts, bone and skin mostly. An amazing

product of human creativity with no technology as we know it today. Dyson's approach has similar philosophy, he chooses to use some modern materials available from our technology to build boats replicating the design features of the originals because these materials are available to any who wish to build a baidarka today.

So in the final section of this book we get to read about and see George Dyson building a baidarka with aluminum bulkheads and tubular stringers, all fabricated with ordinary shop tools, SEWN together with nylon twine, and covered with tough nylon fabric skin that came from the paper industry's filtration systems. I asked Dyson why not just heliarc weld up the light frame as he mentions in the book the need to pull the thread really tight for stiffness, and he replied that anyone can sew up a boat but heliarc welding is not available everywhere. The juxtaposition of this aboriginal design and the modern metal components with Dyson pictured sewing it all together is mentally a stopper at first. You just have to accept the man's originality of thought.

The back of the book has pages of line drawings of the evolution of the baidarka through its known history and complete plans for the 24' two-hole baidarka clear enough to build from. Dyson says this design is now superseded by progress made since the book was first published in 1986 and that new one-hole and three-hole designs are in hand with materials and even kit parts soon to be available. But the 24' plans are in my hands already as I am caught up in this thing and the building and paddling of a 24' sea kayak for not a whole lot of money (I will build it in spruce and plywood) has sung its siren song to me.

Dyson established the Baidarka Historical Society as a bona fide non-profit educational entity to continue collecting and disseminating information on the Aleut boats and operates his own business developing the design for building by those of us interested. He has moved to the working waterfront in Bellingham, Washington, to pursue his commercial venture and has rationalized this environment as being acceptable since the baidarka was a work boat and he is now surrounded by work boats on the Bellingham waterfront.

**Editor Comments in 2009:** When I did this review in 1991 the book sold for a modest \$20 despite its obviously high production costs. Today it is offered on Amazon new at \$84 and used in the \$50s.

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The start in the race for the Ice Yacht Challenge Pennant of America between the Poughkeepsie Ice Yacht Club and the Hudson River Ice Yacht Club at Poughkeepsie February 14, 1887.

What's faster than a speeding locomotive? A bird? A plane? Superman? Well no, in 1890 the correct answer would have been the Ice Yacht, of course! John Roosevelt, uncle of Franklin D., raced the Poughkeepsie train north along the Hudson on his huge ice yacht, *Icecle*, and won the race. His speed? Over 100mph! What a sight that must have been! That is an astonishing speed in any era, including ours today.

Over the recent holiday season the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library in Hyde Park, New York, on the Hudson River, hosted and presented an exhibit of antique ice yachts. The show opened December 27, 2008 and ran through January 3, 2009 and will be repeated next December. Celebrating the winter season, the show was titled "Dutch Winter Fun: Ice Yachting on the Hudson." The Hudson River Ice Yacht Club joined the FDR Library as sponsors of the event, along with the Hudson River Maritime Museum in Kingston, New York, and others. Nine splendid antique ice yachts were on display on the beautiful grounds of the historic FDR Library.

Ice boating has captivated the interest of a small percentage of the boating public. It is a rare and wild passion that overtakes those who pursue it. They must share a combined Zen-like patience to await the arrival of the ideal conditions, namely, very cold weather making solid smooth ice, with dry conditions to keep the ice from being covered in a deep blanket of snow, with a willingness to endure cold outdoor conditions, AND... then yet more patience to wait for wind. Consequently those diehard ice yachts folks might not only wait for the right day, they wait for the right month, they even wait for the right year. Often several years will go by without the complete combination.

Following the arrival of the Europeans to this continent, this area of New York State was largely settled by the Dutch in the 1600s who brought with them many of their traditional ways. From whence they came in the Netherlands, harshly cold winter winds would blow out of the northwest off the North Sea, freezing the inland seas. While travel by road was then severely compromised, people moved across the frozen seas as a way to visit family and friends on the other side. To cover more distance first they used skates of horn or bone strapped to their shoes, which eventually gave way to iron blades. One outgrowth of this was transport during the winter on vessels with skates and powered by sails across the solid ice. It is said the Dutch introduced ice boating to New York in the 1700s on the Hudson River.

## The Thrill of the Chill Ice Yacht Exhibit 2008-9 Hyde Park, New York

By David Wiebe

One of the earliest centers for iceboating was Poughkeepsie, New York, where many early ice yachts were built and where Oliver Booth is given credit for building the first iceboat in America in 1790. A marvelous collection of historic, antique ice yachts built there and elsewhere belongs to the members of the Hudson River Ice Yacht Club, one of the oldest clubs, having been founded in 1885. Many of the club's archives, including old photographs, written materials and several iceboats, are housed in the Hudson River Maritime Museum in Kingston, New York. Most of the iceboats are privately owned and two belong to the club. These sailing craft are maintained by their respective owners or by volunteers of the club.

One such example is the ice yacht *Whiff*, built for Irving Grinnell of New Hamburg, New York, as a functional display piece for the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of the United States. Jacob Buckhout, widely acknowledged as the best builder and designer of iceboats in the Hudson Valley spared no expense in creating the elegant yacht. For many Americans, this was their first chance to actually see an iceboat. *Whiff* was discovered in a barn by members of the Hudson River Ice Yacht Club (HRIYC) and has undergone restoration by members of the club in the early 1960s, and some refurbishments at several points in time since then. For the occasion of this exhibit at the FDR Library, *Whiff* was spiffed up, including removal of the old finish and the application of numerous coats of new varnish bringing her appearance up to a very high and gleaming standard.

As a newbie to the club, I wanted to participate in the process of working together with some of the longstanding members such as John Sperr, Dock Shuter, Robert Wills, and Robert Bard, in whose workshop we worked. As we sanded the surfaces and applied additional coats of varnish to *Whiff*, gradually, piece by small piece of the club lore was imparted to me, much like an oral tradition.

John Sperr, whose main sport in life is iceboating, and which he pursues with great passion and dedication, sponsors the website [www.hriyc.org](http://www.hriyc.org), which is both a resource for historical information, as well as a site for dis-

persing news, such as announcing the status of the ice and the arrival of good ice yachting conditions. One fascinating feature on his site is the recently discovered toolbox of the famous ice yacht builder, George Buckhout, son of Jacob, builder of *Whiff*. It was found in a junk shop by one of the club's historians, Brian Reid, and contains most of Buckhout's old hand tools and even handwritten notes and important specs and measurements for the ice yachts he was building well into the 1920s.

The collection of ice yachts which was displayed at the FDR Library grounds was made up of so-called "stern steerers" because the aftmost runner is attached to a tiller and steered much like a rudder on a sailboat. They are typically gaff rigged although one example, *Vixen*, sported a lateen rig.

The beautiful ice yacht, *Whiff*, is an example of true "yacht finish" construction, referred to in a May, 1876, article appearing in the *Poughkeepsie Eagle* as "The Finest Ice Yacht in the World". One visitor to the exhibit was heard to remark that *Whiff* was "the Stradivarius of the iceboats!" It is built of very fine materials; exquisite pine and the best mahogany for the backbone, clear white pine for the runner plank and lightweight spruce for the spars. The joinery is a woodworker's delight with expert fit, every exposed edge is planed with a tasteful bead to soften the corners and add a small attractive detail. At the front of the cockpit, an elegantly raked and steam bent mahogany coaming makes a graceful transition from the side rail to the center beam. The floor of the cockpit is cross-planked with narrow wainscot in fine edge grain spruce. A graceful fantail stern is fashioned out of mahogany to create a beautiful flourish at the stern.

*Whiff* may be a true antique of unparalleled beauty but she is not kept safely displayed in a museum. This ice yacht is still put on the ice and sailed to enjoy the purpose for which she was built.

As is the case with fishing boats, the race to bring in the earliest catch for the highest price gave way to friendly and fierce competition and contests for speed as pure recreation developed. Iceboats seem to have, as their main purpose, speed, hence contests and races.

As shown in some of the accompanying early photos, the sport of iceboating was popular in a day and age when people went out on the ice to skate, fish, harvest ice, and generally cross the river on foot. Several very active neighboring ice yachting clubs would compete with one another, a tradition which continues today. Rivalries developed





*Northern Light* turning the stake at Poughkeepsie in the Ice Yacht Challenge Pennant of America February 14, 1887.



Iceboating at Hyde Park in 1900.

between these clubs and competition was fierce to capture the 30' long silk Ice Yacht Challenge Pennant of America and the silver Tiffany Van Nostrand Cup, as reported in the January 8, 2009 *New York Times*, in its article about the restoration of a large ice yacht called *Rocket*. According to the *New York Times*, the North Shrewsbury Ice Boat and Yacht Club of Red Bank, New Jersey, has competed three times in races against the Hudson River Ice Yacht Club since 1880.

*Jack Frost* and *Rocket* are giant 50 footers spreading around 750sf and 900sf of sail area respectively. At an earlier time, owner Archie Rogers raced *Jack Frost* against John Roosevelt's *Icicle*, which was much larger at 68' 10", carrying 1070sf of sail. Both won the Ice Yacht Challenge Pennant of America three times.

An evolutionary process developed in ice yacht design. Jacob Buckhout was successful collaborating with Captain Relyea, who proposed changes, reconfiguring the geometry of the stern steerer ice yacht. They designed and built an iceboat half the size of the largest ice boats, which turned out to be faster and more nimble over the course. They did so by reducing the overall weight and the sail sizes and relocating the maststep further forward, which improved the balance and speed. That first version, which was named *Robert Scott*, won many races. That new improved design became the new rager.

Gradually around the teens and into the 20s, the popularity of iceboating started to wane. Elsewhere, new lighter, faster and cheaper, front steering iceboats were being developed and built in Wisconsin and Michigan. The old ice yachts dispersed, were sold or stored away as the golden age of ice yachting seemed to be coming to a close. Was it the two great World Wars, the Great Depression? HRIYC itself foundered for a time from the 1930s until around the 1960s.

Thereafter, interest in the old stern steerers was rediscovered. Those new front steering iceboats were nimble, fast and affordable but nothing compared with these grand old, gaff rigged yachts from a bygone era. Thus the passion was revived and rekindled due to the efforts of a man named Ray Ruge. He and a group of avid enthusiasts located the old maidens of ice sailing, dragged them out of barns, and proceeded to refurbish these

long-unused ice yachts and bring them back onto the ice for sailing. He also apparently breathed life back into the withered HRIYC. Members of the club found old *Jack Frost* and restored him in 1973, bringing him back to his former glory.

This work was likewise accomplished with a host of other such elegant antique ice yachts. Whereas in 1866 it was estimated that there were 100 ice yachts on the river, now 30 or more of these original antique iceboats are sailing again, nine of which were displayed at the exhibit at the FDR Library.

On display at the exhibit were:

*Aurora*, circa 1910, 29' sail area 250sf.

*Genevieve*, circa 1910, 30', sail area 350sf.

*Puff*, 1869, 27', sail area 250sf.

*Whiff*, 1875, 31' 6", sail area 365sf.

*Vixen*, 1889, 24', sail area 340sf.

*Jack Frost*, 1883, 50', sail area 750sf.

*Kriss*, 1898, 22', sail area 220sf.

*Sweet Marie*, 1899, 27', sail area 299sf.

*Hound*, 1900, 25', sail area 230sf.

Without their sails raised, the ice yachts, standing in the snow on the lawn at the FDR Library, had a surprisingly minimal appearance. They are by nature minimalist with the basic structure forming a cross which supports a mast and rigging. An intrepid crew from HRIYC kept watch and offered explanations to the stream of many visitors who poured through the exhibit. There was a bite to the brisk, chilly breeze but no one complained. After all, they are iceboat enthusiasts.

Considering the avid interest and enthusiasm encountered from the visitors, it is expected that HRIYC will be back at the FDR Library again for another such exhibit. If the conditions are right, the irrepressible ice yachters may defect and all be out on the ice.

Since conditions on the Hudson River are often unsuitable, the club often sails on South Tivoli Bay at Tarrytown, New York, just next to the river and separated from it by a railroad causeway. The atmosphere on the ice is distinctly warm and inviting, notwithstanding the actual frigid outdoor temperature. People lounge on the ice as if it was a green lawn in a park for a picnic. Grills are set up on the ice, people sit in lawn chairs watching the action, and the whole scene is one of sporting enthusiasm and good cheer.


Unfortunately, conditions ideal for iceboating are becoming less frequently encoun-

tered. With the icebreakers keeping a channel open in the Hudson for cargo ships and, well maybe global warming changes, the perfect conditions are elusive and require patience. This year of 2009 looks promising.

To have the river freeze solid and smooth without snow and to see a match of *Jack Frost* and *Rocket* would indeed be a thrilling and tantalizing prospect. Stay tuned. We hope it will happen, we just don't know when.

## Come Take A Ride

Come, take a ride. In a moderate breeze a gentle push is all that is needed to start the boat gliding over the ice. As you pull in the mainsail the boat accelerates so rapidly you can feel the G forces acting on your body. Another tug on the mainsheet and the craft explodes into a burst of speed, moving faster, and even faster yet, now seeming more like a rocket than a boat. The wind blasts past your face and you hear the thunder of the runners on the ice a few scant inches below you. The shoreline becomes a blur as you seem almost to become airborne. The windward runner lifts off the ice and for a brief moment you experience the thrill of a graceful hike. In these conditions you are traveling 60mph, but it feels like so much more. Easing the mainsheet brings the boat to a gradual stop where you allow time for your heart to slow and take a moment to savor the exhilaration you have just experienced.



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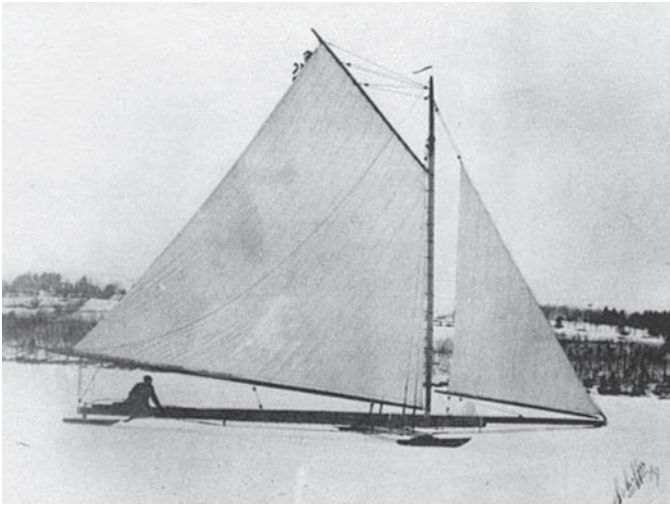
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# Raiding in the Netherlands

Radboud Raid, Grou, May 16–17, 2009  
Dorestad Raid September 9–13, 2009

From Hans Vandermissen

## Radboud Resurrected

Today's Dutch were strangely late to modern leisure raiding, while their forebears, the Frysians, already had by the 7th century acquired a great reputation in the serious variety. Only by late 2005 (eight years behind the French!), the Dutch took to raiding again and established the Dutch Foundation for Natural Sailing for the purpose. They launched the Dorestad Raid in the autumn, which acquired a considerable following and instantly became a yearly tradition.

In Spring 2007 another Raid was hatched: the Radboud Raid, named after the fearless Frysian king who fiercely fought the Franks around 700. From day one this one became a tradition as well.

In 2009 Radboud's spirit will haunt his old home turf on May 16th and 17th near the Frysian town of Grou. Boats may arrive on Friday May 15th or Saturday morning, but in time for the start at 1200 EET (GMT+2) and can be launched in Grou (instructions follow after signing up) with free car park nearby. The focal point of the Raid, a big tent erected on a peninsula 1km SE of Grou, offers refuge if the weather turns atypically nasty during the barbecue on Saturday evening. After the party sleeping bags may be rolled out.

By day, the surroundings of Grou will be raided, including the Alde Faenen, an area of outstanding, though very wet, natural beauty, famous with generations of Frysian loving yachtsmen. This all for a trifling €0. p.p. including barbeque and booze, €5. for kids up to 12 years (with non-toxic booze substitute).

## Recent History

When in 2004 he won with partner Nelleke Linthorst the Great Glenn Raid in his design "Little Nell", naval architect Arend Lambrechtsen decided that the Dutch should have their own Raid. With similarly inclined friends Wouter van Heeren, Bart-Jan Bats and Hans Vandermissen, Arend established the Dutch Foundation for Natural Sailing with the aim of organizing rallies for engineless craft that sail and row well, with easily lowerable masts. The early autumn four-days' Dorestad Raid has from 2005 consistently attracted some 20 to 30 craft from four nations. For three years the Raid sailed down the river IJssel and beyond, from the ancient town of Deventer to the soggy surroundings of Giet-hoorn, where natives move around in punter boats rather than cars.

In 2008 the Raid ran down the river Maas, from Niftrik near Nijmegen to Nederhemert near 's-Hertogenbosch. In Dorestad Raids the well appointed motor barge *In Dubio*, skippered by staunch Raid-supporter Leo Versloot, is hotel ship and social centre.

In 2009 the Dorestad Raid will sail from September 9th to September 13th in the rural area between the cities of Amsterdam and Leiden, strewn with historic towns to please the foreigners and fixed bridges to hone the crews' mast-handling skills.

The two days' Radboud Raid is organized together with Marrekrite, which maintains free moorings in rural areas along the Frysian lakes. The old king Radboud eventually had to surrender to the Franks' major domo types and their proselytizing missionaries, but his kinsmen continued raiding the British and the French, for instance under their duke Ubbo in 860. Yet, foreign raiders are cordially invited to join the fleet this time. No weaponry allowed ashore, nor horses on board, but they may try traditional native Frysian craft, like tjotters or scows. Saves dragging a trailer all over Europe and is more historic fun.



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# Wind and Waves

## And the Water was Blown Flat

By Gail Ferris  
gaileferris@hotmail.com

It is a good idea to find out what the paddling conditions and situations are before arriving to kayak in an area one has never paddled before, especially what the wind is like and how the ice behaves. I find that, despite being an experienced kayak paddler, I can never be experienced enough to just go paddle anywhere with complete confidence that nothing threatening will happen.

I have encountered situations where there were no waves but rather that the water was absolutely smooth and did not indicate any wind. In my account of paddling in Pond Inlet on Baffin Island in 1989 I wrote:

"On day nine heading in a roundabout way home to Pond Inlet, once again there was a grey sky with mixed clouds to the west showing some more lenticular clouds indicating strong wind which was coming from the south. We set off first heading north along the west side to round Cape Knud Jorgensen.

We made the tip of Cape Knud Jorgensen without much effort because we had the wind behind us. Since the wind was coming from the south I knew after we rounded the cape heading now south that we had the makings of a difficult day.

My paddling companions blithely set off from the tip of the cape that they had just made with ease. Now we all were heading south directly into the wind on the east side of Cape Knud Jorgensen. Sure enough from the south was coming a very powerful katabatic wind. The wind was not blowing horizontally but in this topographic situation, the wind was blowing top down so that it blew the water flat. From my kayak I could see absolutely no waves at all. I was shocked to think that there could be such a thing as wind blowing is such a way as to blow the water absolutely flat.

Usually from my kayak I expected that I could see the wind as indicated by waves. However as I found out this is not always the case. Indeed the worst wind can be a downdraft where the water is blown flat.

As we worked our way down the coast, hugging the rock cliffs to avoid as much as possible the inevitable exposure to this fierce wind, there was no doubt in my mind that this endeavor was not only futile, but courted disaster. Not only was making the nearest known landing place which was five miles away impossible but trying to turn our kayaks 180 degrees to return to the tip of the cape in this wind could easily result in a capsized of a kayak.

Kayaks are very stable going into a wind, but when run with the wind they do not have the same stability. Paddling became very strenuous and this extreme amount of exertion could give a person a heart attack. I could barely move my boat. It was everyman for himself, a dead heat battle. I knew that the only suitably sized landing point in a geologically stable area was south five miles away.

However on our previous passage running up the east side of this cape I had noted that there was a tiny but useable, in an emergency, landing area beneath very unstable traprock cliffs at a waterfall midway. Anything in an emergency would be better than nothing, I thought.

Later upon consulting with a meteorologist at Pond Inlet, Hermann Steltner, he said that katabatic wind actually not only blows the water flat but actually depresses the water in this particular area. Now I knew I was not imagining things.

The general area in Pond Inlet showing some of the igneous geology. I was told that the Penny Ice Cap south of the town can generate severe katabatic winds which will blow kayakers away from shore and can tip them over. This area looks very innocent in the pictures but on a warm summer afternoon without any warning this type of wind can develop.



The safest solution in this area is to paddle close to shore in the lee out of the wind shadow. The Penny Ice Cap is on the right to the center of the horizon and Mount Herodier is the pyramid shaped mountain on the left.

In this area it is impossible to forecast trends, one can only take hourly readings on a barometer. Hermann Steltner, meteorologist in Pond Inlet, told me that a barometer has to be read every few minutes over a half an hour to deduce a trend. Extremely low numbers can be generated by just the atmospheric pressure from an ice cap such as the Greenland or the Penny ice cap.

I paddled my kayak in Arctic Bay on Baffin Island in 1994 but before I went I spoke with Glen Williams in Arctic Bay, who has extensive firsthand experience with conditions there. He told me that Arctic Bay in its early days used to have round houses because of the intense wind.

To be doubly sure of what I would come across as a kayak paddler, when I arrived at Arctic Bay we sat down to discuss what kayak paddling conditions I might expect to encounter. Big question on my mind was what would the ice do? As I looked out the window while flying in I saw that there was ice everywhere. This happened to be a year for heavy annual ice.

He said that annual ice is unpredictable. It will drift into a bay on the tide and sometime later will drift back out again. When this happens boaters become trapped wherever they might be and it is called "drying out". Only someone like Glenn with his ultra light aircraft has any mobility to escape this type of entrapment.



Arctic Bay ice jam. I had no experience with annual ice. This picture shows the annual ice that had drifted in behind me as I paddled down Adams Sound, I got to dry out a couple days.

Glen Williams described to me an intense windstorm of 70kts that occurred just a week earlier on an innocent looking, blue-sky afternoon. The storm did a lot of damage all over town by picking up and smashing all sorts of objects like lumber and including his ultra light aircraft. Winds of this intensity had come completely unexpectedly so things, even though they were tied down, hadn't been tied down well enough to withstand this wind of 70kts.

He advised me that these windstorms could not be predicted and at the airport in Nanisivik that particular windstorm was only blowing at 30-40kts, but down in Arctic Bay it blew 70kts. I could easily see that the straight off the water, dropping in elevation funnel shaped topography in this area seemed to accelerate the speed of the wind to double the speed of the wind elsewhere.





I had been told that if Adams Sound looked dark and threatening when viewed from Arctic Bay to avoid going down into Adams Sound until conditions looked better.

When paddling a kayak it is hard to judge the size of waves when they are being blown away. I discovered this as I was leaving Arctic Bay heading south to the point. As I was starting out at the head of Arctic Bay, the wind was blowing a non-threatening speed of 10-12kts. As I made my way out of the bay, within less than a mile from town the speed of the wind dramatically began escalating. It was one of those situations where I told myself, "I better be in control of my kayak and ready to dive into shore once I see a place where I can land when I get out to the point". I had already camped there so I knew where to pull in to a spot where it would be easy to bring my kayak up above the tide line on the shore.

By the time I blew madly along to the point near Society Cliffs just two miles away I was experiencing waterskiing conditions only nobody was towing my kayak and to stay upright I had to lean over into the wind. I used a most extreme low brace such that I leaned over the side onto my elbow, which was on my paddle blade. I could automatically feel my need to counterbalance the thrust of the wind by reducing my body surface area presented to the wind and outboarding my center of gravity to the point where I was countering the roll over effect on my kayak from the wind. In other words I leaned out and down until I could feel my kayak was in neutral buoyancy to the wind to keep my kayak upright.

In another situation I came out from a point and started to paddle through a tiny opening into a little harbor flanked by shallow shores near Arctic Bay between Holy Cross Point and Johnson Harbor. Just as I, without the least suspicion, edged my kayak into the opening near Johnson Harbor I cut across the wind sheer line to flat looking water. Instantly I was blasted by the wind. Yes the water was flat. It was being blown flat by the wind indicating nothing. I felt as though I had just gotten myself behind a jet on take off. Instantly I was in an impossible situation where I could not paddle against this wind and worse yet I had to really not be afraid to hunker down over my deck to lower my center of gravity. Immediately, without any thought of indecision, I applied the full strength of my rudder to get out of the wind and used my body as a sail while I was heading down wind.

I was glad that I just happened to have been paddling with the full surface area of the "barn door rudder" in the water at this time because often in low wind conditions I would use the most minimal surface area of the rudder to control the bow.

Who would have thought! It all looked so innocent. The sky was blue with no clouds the sun was out nice and bright there was no scud hurrying by overhead.

In Arctic Bay, looks south to Holy Cross Point, two miles away. This photo is showing the backside of very strong wind that is blowing from behind me over the water. There is not a cloud that would indicate any wind would be blowing. I was glad that I was standing on land rather than being in my kayak at this moment. The area I camped at after having been blown out of the bay was on the point to the right of this picture only two miles downwind.



In Upernavik, Greenland, as I was paddling my kayak as close as possible to the base of the mountain Sanderson's Hope I have had the experience katabatic winds. These down drafts were coming off the top of Sanderson's Hope on a hot summer day. All the while as I was struggling to maintain myself I looked up to see gulls flying next to the rocks completely unaffected.

Even though I was as close to the cliffs as possible hoping to be out of the downdraft my strategy did not work. In such a threatening situation the worst thing to happen is for me to lose my paddle, so I tied my paddle off to my deck line, just in case.



Wind patterns on the water. Where the water is flat there is no wind and Greenland paddlers such as Matias Løvstrøm stick to the flat areas to avoid the extra work of having to paddle against the wind. The picture was taken in the Upernavik area showing Sanderson's Hope, the tallest pyramid shaped mountain on the left horizon.

I was approaching Sortehule at a very oblique angle from its south side I was east of it in my kayak. I had just emerged from Torssukatak passage, famous for its waterfalls that come out of the sky, and was between Nutarmiut and Umanaq Islands. There was not any place to land in that area either. Sortehule/Akornat has vertical cliffs on both sides where many sea birds nest. The extensive white area on the rocks is bird droppings accumulation.



A more typical view of Sortehule which I took from my kayak with a broadside wind of 10-12kts. As a kayak paddler I am not comfortable paddling through this passage because there are too many miles to go with no place to land, just vertical cliffs.

Just to confirm my observation while I was in Upernavik I talked with a motor boater who said Sanderson's Hope and Torssut Passage are dangerous places where a motorboat can be flipped over by down drafting katabatic winds. Katabatic winds are especially apt to occur on a cheery summer day without a cloud in the sky.



The opening to Torssut that shows the sheer basalt cliffs dropping 3000' into the water.

As far as barometric pressure change is concerned I learned from experience to watch the clouds. I have seen clouds come in and turn into a storm while the barometric pressure showed no change for an hour. This experience of the arrival of a windstorm while I was on the water for my first time happened with such sudden intensity. I was paying attention to the readings on my barometric watch which were unchanged.



I did not notice that clouds were rushing toward me down the valley between Umiasuqssuk mountain and Qaersorsuaq Island. In an instant I was hit by a blast that nearly ripped the paddle out of my hands. The oily calm, dead flat water was torn up by 25kt blasts of wind.

I wasted no time deciding what to do. Using my best emergency tactic I tied my paddle off to my deck line to my kayak so that should the worst imaginable happen I would not lose my most important tools, my kayak and my paddle. I assessed the situation and headed for the nearest shore where landing was possible. I got out, dragged my boat floating it on the incoming waves up onto dry land, tied it off with extra lines to the rocks. I found a fairly level spot and set up camp.

Later I was unable to stand up in the wind as I attempted to get some water and rooster tails shot up from the waves that crashed into the rocks where my kayak was tied on dry land. Even though I had been monitoring my barometric watch no change showed until an hour after the storm hit. The storm had arrived unabated from the open water of Baffin Bay.



Just as a storm is beginning. Note the dense clouds to the right side of the photo. The clouds and wind are just starting to tumble down to the water. I was not in my kayak when I took these pictures but I knew from previous experience that this was indeed another one of those storms I had already experienced in this area when I was paddling here.

I have learned the value of knowing topographic effects on storms, not just simple topography such as a mountain a passage or a sound but the effect the ice cap in an area can have on winds. Below are some pictures illustrating topographic temperatures/air density of cold air effect on a warm air storm coming across Baffin Bay into the passage near Kullorsuaq at Holm Island.



I have experienced cold air pushing me down inside Laksefjord/Eqalugarssuit that was displacing the less dense warm air. In the photograph warm air from the west is being held back at water level by cold dense air from the Greenland Icecap to the east or left side of the picture. This was a temporary situation that was overcome by the power of the storm coming in from the right side or west. I am looking south from the village of Kullorsuaq at Holm and Sardlia islands about four miles away. Holm Island is an east/west ridged 800 meter island about 20 miles long. It forms a barrier to the south from Kullorsuaq. I was not in my kayak when I took this picture.



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I suffer from Restless Boat Syndrome. I did not know this at first, but over time the clues were too obvious to ignore. The full extent of my problem recently became apparent following the purchase of an Express 34 sailboat that I use for racing and sailing on San Francisco Bay. This by itself would not have been very odd except that the purchase followed by just six months the launch of the modified Chebacco daysailer I built last year. I enjoy both boats very much though I really don't have time for more than one boat. These boats are very different, fulfill different needs, and are suitable for different types of sailing. So perhaps the purchase of the Express was not so odd after all. However, this was not an isolated incident but fit a long, established pattern.

Shortly after buying the Express I started talking to my friends about sailing to Hawaii in 2012. My friends liked the idea, but without exception they all voiced doubts that I would even own the Express in 2012. I was insulted. But upon reflection I had to admit that they were probably right. Though I have owned many boats in the last 20 years, very few of them have lasted more than three. It was time to face the facts, I could very well suffer from Restless Boat Syndrome.

Faced with the prospect of such a serious character flaw, like a penchant for cheap wine or a fondness for old Doris Day movies, I initially refused to admit that I had a problem. So in the interests of disproving the initial diagnosis, I began researching Restless Boat Syndrome.

What I found startled and frightened me. There are, in fact, several variants of the disease and the variant that I appear to suffer from is one of the more serious types. The only mitigating information I was able to uncover is that the disease is quite common. It turns out that there are many people who suffer from this debilitating malady, in varying degrees, and many of them probably don't even know that they are suffering from a clinically documented form of dementia. As of this writing there is no known cure.

The most common form of the disease, which afflicts between 74% and 86% of all cases, follows a well-established path. The innocent young neophyte buys a small boat, possibly one with a motor, perhaps one with sails. Usually this most common form does not start out with rowing or paddling craft, although such cases have been observed in the field. After a year or two of using his small boat (close to 91% of all who suffer from the disease are men), having gained some expertise and a bit of confidence, the young neophyte concludes it is time to buy a larger boat. After all, the current boat is small and lacks important amenities like a private head, a real galley, maybe a flat-screen TV. There is really no upper limit to this type of Restless Boat Syndrome except that which is imposed by one's finances.

One curious feature of this common form of Restless Boat Syndrome (RBS), and one that lends credence to the notion that it is a form of dementia, is that as the boats get larger and more costly, they get used less and less frequently. The amenities that seemed so important, like the second head, the all-electric galley with faux granite counters, and the master suite with wet bar and surround sound movie capability, almost never get used. The second head is closed off and used as storage because, as everyone who has lived with marine plumbing knows, every marine head is a

## Restless Boat Syndrome

By John Tuma

sewage explosion just waiting to happen. The refrigerator is nice but expensive to run and it's just easier to bring drinks in a cooler anyway. The surround sound is cool, though, and a real pleasure on that one weekend a year when no maintenance is being done and there is time to take a short break.

Taking a break does not necessarily imply leaving the dock, however. The new boat, 53' of gleaming wood and stainless steel, requires at least three people to operate and the two other people you'd want to spend the weekend with are never available on the weekend that you are free. So even though the surround sound is cool, it doesn't compare with the system that is installed at home and most of your friends live closer to home anyway.

People who suffer from this form of RBS can usually remember, wistfully, the simpler days when the boat was small, the systems were limited to a bucket, a few lines, and a small outboard motor, and the boat was in use every weekend all summer long. With concentration it is just possible to recall the many reasons why this boat was so sadly deficient, as were the next three successively larger boats that followed, each one representing new standards of comfort and convenience while offering fewer days of actual boating.

Yes, the new boat represents the paragon of comfort and convenience, a testament to the comforts of home afloat, but no, your wife still isn't interested. And this, I'm afraid, seems to be another common thread in the progression of the disease. In no less than 79% of the reported cases the person suffering from the disease honestly believes that it is the deficiencies of the boat that is keeping his spouse at home. Which is why, when he sits down to think through the problem, he realizes that what he needs is an even bigger boat with more comforts and conveniences because what really frightens his wife more than anything is being stuck out on the water without recourse to a convection oven.

The clinical evidence regarding the most common form of the disease convincingly shows that people who suffer from RBS truly believe that it is possible to turn non-boat people into boat people. Madness. In fact, double blind interview techniques reveal that the most common reasons why spouses and others living with someone who is suffering from RBS do not want to go boating are, in order of frequency; 1) "It's boring," 2) "It's really boring," and 3) "It makes me sick."

Unfortunately, my own symptoms have progressed far beyond the most common form of the disease. While it is easy to chuckle about the reasons RBS sufferers produce as to why a new boat will change things for the better, at least they have reasons, however ridiculous. My own symptoms have taken on a life of their own. I no longer seek to justify my need to get the next boat. I simply need to get the next boat. The boat I most want is always the next boat.

My review of the literature suggests that I may, in fact, suffer from Nonlinear Nonintegrated Restless Boat Syndrome. This variant of the disease is nonlinear because there is no clear trend in terms of size or features.

The next boat could be larger, smaller, sail powered, motor powered, nuclear powered. It doesn't matter. Additionally, the symptoms are nonintegrated because there is no expectation that a new boat will do anything to alter the circumstances in which I find myself. The quest for the new boat is the end in itself and is not in any way integrated into my life, other than costing me a lot of money. And time. It takes a lot of time to constantly seek the next new boat. I use each new boat for a while and then, just as I am getting accustomed to its quirks, just as I am figuring out how to make the most of the boat that I've got, it's time to move on to the next one.

But not even the nonlinear and nonintegrated variant of the disease fully describes my symptoms. After several months of research I discovered a series of rare, extremely debilitating cases whose symptoms matched my own: Multiple Path Nonlinear Nonintegrated Restless Boat Syndrome. Not only have I been looking for the next new boat, I have in fact simultaneously been seeking more than one boat at a time. The observed multiple paths have taken many forms, but in my case there have been two distinct threads, boats I build and boats I purchase. So while I am building a rowboat that strikes me as beautiful and therefore worthy of being built, I can at the same time be seeking the next new boat to purchase from someone else. Happiness (temporary) in one path can coexist with extreme dissatisfaction in the other, though on rare occasion I have had both sides of my multiple needs being met simultaneously.

One reason that this blissful state is temporary is that my life is not compatible with frequent boat use and significant adventures (those lasting more than seven hours) are hopelessly rare. So boats that offer the promise of great adventure rarely deliver, though it is not the fault of the boat. Adventure requires sacrifice and sacrifice demands discipline. Discipline, in turn, requires steely resolve but my resolve is more of the soupy variety.

By contrast, dreaming is easy and it is portable. It offers welcome relief from the work-a-day world and there is no upper limit in terms of length or complexity. Each new boat offers the promise of fulfillment, of an adventure dream realized. The madness sets in when one knows that such dreams will not be realized but still believes that somehow a new boat really will be the answer.

I am a boat builder. Suffering from RBS while being a boat builder is a lot like being an alcoholic while working in a wine shop. However, though there may be no cure, there may be hope. The following actions can lead to dramatic relief from the worst symptoms of RBS.

First and foremost, I must get out and use the boat that I have. Second, I must go out and get some steely resolve. Dreaming is great, but a day actually spent using my boat will be more satisfying than all but the best boat dreams. Third, I must remember that Restless Boat Syndrome is a true form of dementia and the worst thing I can do is suffer alone. I can find sympathy and support at local sailing clubs, yacht clubs, and yacht brokerages. Help is out there.

And finally, I must not be afraid to give in to the symptoms. Every boat is a compromise and no one boat will be able to do everything well. That's why I have five, with a sixth in the planning stages. They are all great boats but the one I most want is that next one.

**Friday, September 12**

I drove down from Oxford, picking up my son Jake at Oakhampton in Devon. The long term weather forecast gave F3 winds from the north becoming more variable from the east after three to four days. The broad plan was (a) to coast sail as far eastwards as possible from Penzance and (b) to overnight at small out of the way harbours. I would then (c) return by train to pick up the rig and (d) recommence the journey east at a future date. I had first attempted this in 2005, but due to strong headwinds could not get away from Falmouth.

As we breasted the rise in the road at the point where Mounts Bay comes into view, it began to rain. It rained steadily for the next two hours. In oilskins we rigged, stowed and launched from the slip on the Albert Pier. I phoned my brother Bob, who lives in Penzance, to ask where we should pay the launch fee. "The harbourmaster will be at his office over by the floating dock, but don't worry you won't see him in this weather." We moored outside a local dive boat, put up the tent, and then retreated to the Dolphin for dinner. Finally we parked the trailer and car in my brother's garden, returned to the boat and turned in for the night.

Saturday, September 13

The 0520h forecast gave F3 to 4 winds from the NW, ideal for rounding the Lizard 17 miles to the SE and mainland Britain's most southerly point. We hoisted sail and cleared the harbour by 0800h as the ferry *Scillonian* was loading at the outer wall. We initially ran across Mounts Bay to close St Michael's Mount on its seaward side and then steered along the coast, about one mile offshore and directly towards the Lizard. With an offshore following wind the sea was fairly smooth and we moved quite fast passing Praa Sands, Porthleven and Mullion. At Mullion the sky cleared to sunshine for the rest of the day. Jake then spotted splashes to seaward, a group of 8-10 dolphins leaping out of the water as they fed on a shoal of fish. The spectacle was further enhanced by gannets dive-bombing the same shoal.

## With Great Britain's Dinghy Cruisers

### *Lowly Worm* From Penzance to Plymouth

By Alan Glanville

(Alan relates another ambitious cruise he has undertaken under sail and oar in his 19'2" Ness Yawl, not alone this time but with his son as crew. All photographs supplied by the author).

Reprinted from the *DCA Bulletin*  
Dinghy Cruising Association (UK)  
Newsletter – Winter 2008



*Lowly Worm* alongside, Coverack.

Off Kynance Cove we were able to identify the fearsome offshore rocks to the west and south of the Lizard. We were half an hour early for the time slot where the current changes from east to west to take us around the point. The wind increased to F4 now and we broad-reached past the Lizard giving us 5½ knots over the ground. *Lowly Worm* rounded Black Head and closed the land to find and enter the tiny harbour of Coverack. We had a very hospitable welcome from local fishermen, the harbourmaster and a local yachtsman. He suggested we lay alongside his shrimper at night to save adjusting our lines as the tide rose and fell.

It was warm and sunny behind the harbour wall. Holidaymakers were fishing and taking the sun. Coverack, nestled around the harbour, was unusually busy with sightseers. This was due to the start of the Tall Ships Race in Falmouth Bay. After a tea at Alfie's Loft we walked along the cliff path to watch the horizon fill with a cloud of square-rigged sail, returning to cook dinner on board. The big boats were still out there when we returned from the bar of the Paris Hotel at 2200h, for there was little wind.

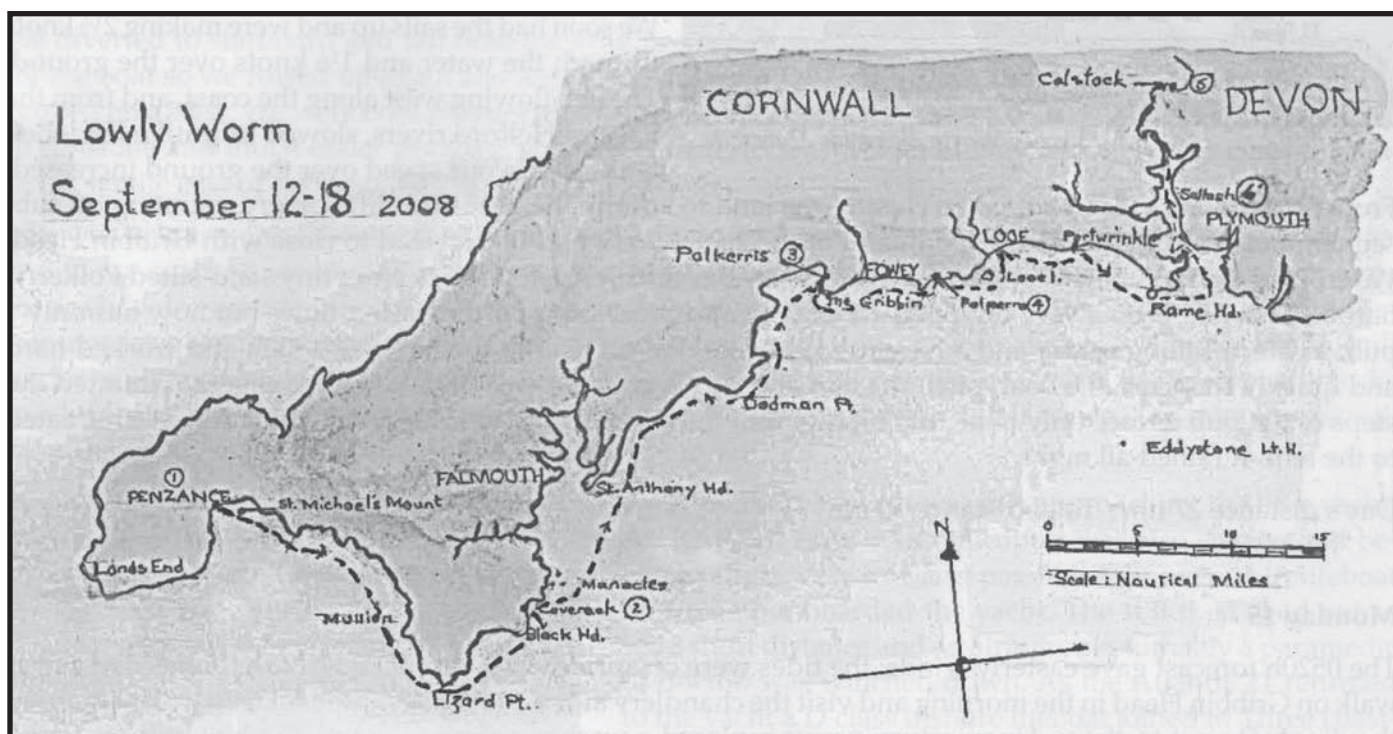
Day's distance 23nm.

Total distance 23nm.

### **Sunday September 14**

We awoke to another NW3 forecast and the promise of a beautiful sunny morning. At 0800h Jake took to the oars and rowed the yawl half a mile out from the land and towards the distant Manacles buoy. The fearsome Manacle Rocks themselves were very visible, a black toothed trap for hundreds of men and ships in days gone by. Today however, like the Lizard yesterday, they presented no danger to us. We soon had the sails up and were making 2½ knots through the water and 1½ knots over the ground. The ebb flowing west along the coast, and from the Fal and Helford rivers, slowed us until noon when it eased and our speed over the ground increased.

From St Anthony's Head we sailed close to the land to admire the beautiful cliff scenery, counting off subsequent headlands, Nare





Head, Dodman Point, Chapel Point and Black Head to close with Gribbin Head. We crossed Gerran's Bay, Veryans Bay, Mevagissey Bay and St Austell Bay to enter tiny sand-silted Polkerris Harbor. This had been a very big pilchard driving and processing port in earlier times but now has only a pub, a cafe, a sailing centre and a handful of houses. We came onto the beach at 1900h and worked hard and quickly to secure the boat, pitch the tent and cook supper. It was dark when we eagerly mounted the steps of the pub terrace only to be told bluntly that the pub was closed for a private function. We retreated to the tent. It rained all night.

Day's distance 27nm.

Total distance 50nm.

### Monday, September 15

The 0520h forecast gave easterly winds; the tides were on springs and also from the east. It was decided to walk on Gribbin Head in the morning and visit the chandlery at Fowey. We anchored in deep water and used the dinghy to get to shore. Upon returning we replaced a washer on the centre plate pivot bolt assuming it was the source of an annoying leak. Only later did we notice a weeping leak through a screw hole in the centerboard casing hidden beneath the compass.

We cast off at 1530h, Jake rowing 1½ miles into a headwind to the seaward end of the Gribbin Head. The true wind was felt here, directly from the east. We began tacking ESE past Fowey, Lantic Bay, Pencarrow Head and Lantivet Bay. The F3 headwind gave a choppy sea and progress was slow. Darkness fell as we reached the lit buoy at Udder Rock. For the following three hours the yawl beat into the darkness guided by navigation lights and dark cliffs. We could see the white flashes of Udder Rock buoy, The Ranneys buoy off Looe Island and the Eddystone lighthouse way out to sea. Jake then picked out the sectored light near the entrance to Polperro and we beat up the line of red and white sectors. A small white surf line visible beneath the cliffs helped in knowing where the boat was positioned.

It took three hours from Udder Rock to actually open the narrow entrance to Polperro. Dropping sail in the entrance we rowed through the packed fishing boat moorings under the gaze of the windows of whitewashed

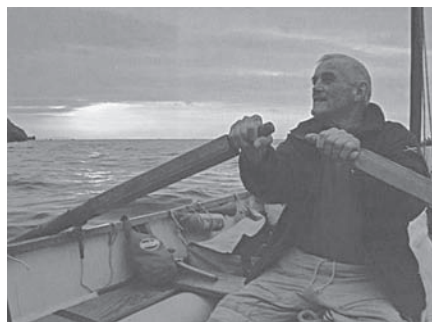
cottages which reached up into the sky ahead and on both sides. At 1030h we stepped out onto the hard in the very heart of the village. Bacon sandwiches and hot tea were the appropriate and welcome late supper. By the time the tent was up and we had a quick walk around it was getting on for midnight before we climbed into our sleeping bags.

Day's distance 8nm.

Total distance 58nm.

### Tuesday September 16

There was a 0520h forecast of easterly winds again. We packed immediately to catch the end of the morning tide. We were away at 0710h, creeping out of the harbour as grey turned to colour with the dawn. Sails up we resumed our beat to the east. It took us a long time to round the rocks south of Looe Island, rowing the last half mile directly into the wind. Once around we broad-reached away fast towards Looe harbour. The aim was to enter, moor up, cook breakfast and await the afternoon tide. However we had taken so long beating up from Polperro that the spring ebb was now in its third and fastest phase.



Alan at the oars, leaving Polperro.

With the wind blowing straight into the narrow embanked river mouth large rollers were set up. Having ridden a few of them and getting close to the Banjo pier head I was concerned that once in the river proper the wind might be sufficiently blanketed that the tide would overcome the wind. The boat might fall back out of control and sideways on into the rollers. We diverted to starboard and ran onto the sand beach there. However the surf was sufficient to be unsafe for the boat so we rowed off again and anchored. In this location and rather uncomfortable in the swell we cooked breakfast.

We were both pleased to get under way again and cold air and lumpy sea soon gave way to sunshine and much easier progress, with short tacks to seaward and long tacks along the coast. At this point, a mile east of Looe, something very odd and very sad occurred.

Jake was helming and I was lying on the bottom boards with my back to the bow. I looked over my shoulder and to my surprise saw a small yacht very close ahead. Jake confirmed it had been on the same tack as us for a while. I responded that it was unusual and pleasing to see that he was sailing and not motoring. Ten minutes later we noted that the boat had steered shoreward and was close alongside Colmer Rocks, still under main and Genoa. Again I commented, saying that he must know the coast well to approach the rocks in a keelboat, and that he must be anchoring there to picnic. I lay back and fell asleep. Ten minutes passed. Jake kicked my ankle and said, "Al, you might want to see this."

An Atlantic 21 lifeboat was fast approaching the little yacht. An RAF Sea King SAR helicopter was also closing and began to circle, very low and passing right over us. A lifeboat crewmember boarded the yacht. The ILB then sped out to sea a short distance and an airman, presumably a paramedic or doctor, was winched down. As the Atlantic 21 returned to the yacht a D class inshore lifeboat joined it. Three coastguards also came on foot across the beach. We were sailing away from the incident all the time but I had switched on the hand-held VHF set. A message came on from Brixham coastguard standing down a Pan saying that a missing vessel had been found in Looe Bay.

Later that day I read in the local newspaper that a yachtsman had been missing from the Acorn Yacht Club, Plymouth, that his car was present but that his boat a Sadler 26 was missing. The story said that the coastguard had issued a Pan to all ships to keep a lookout for it and that lifeboats and a helicopter had been searching the coast from Monday daylight. (When I returned home I googled the story. The rescuers had found a dead body on the boat).

We continued tacking until we could identify the rocks which sheltered the minute harbour of Portwrinkle. Jake steered us in quite fast between rocks and into the narrowest of entrances, whereupon I dropped the main smartly for us to run onto the beach just a few yards inside. This tiny space had no other boat in the water, completely dried out at LW, and was totally exposed to any blow from the east or south or to any unsettled weather. The wind was only F3 though, from the east, and the forecast was settled. Even so for an hour either side of HW the sea was surging over the low rock breakwater. We floated the boat up during the afternoon and allowed it to settle at the very top of the tide at about 2000h.

Jake had a long cliff walk during the afternoon whilst I had tea at the imposing Whitsand golfing hotel. It was the only public building, imposing and towering over a cluster of retirement bungalows. We returned together in the evening for a drink. It is a welcoming place.

Day's distance 9.5nm.

Total distance 67.5nm.

### Wednesday, September 17

The inshore forecast gave easterlies of 3 to 4 occasionally 5. At 0830h we dragged the boat down a few yards to a receding tide and rowed out. We hoisted sail but immediately took in a reef as we left the lee of the cliff. To our delight the wind was in the north. We reached off towards Rame head at 5½ knots passing it one hour later and continuing at speed across the mouth of Plymouth Sound towards the Mewstone and Wembury Bay. Salcombe as a destination suddenly seemed feasible. However the idea crumbled equally fast as the wind veered to NE and then to due east, at first falling and then increasing in strength back to a 4. So we were once again beating into a lumpy sea.

As we had reached our primary goal, a city with good train connections, we agreed that a reach up the Tamar was no bad idea. We changed course and sailed fast off the wind to pass west of Plymouth breakwater and west of Drake's Island into the Narrows at Devonport. In calm water we sailed up Millbrook Lake to moor and have lunch. We then progressed up the Tamar against the ebb,

Night sail near Polperro.



with British and NATO surface warships and submarines to view on the Devonport shore. We passed the mouth to the River Lynher and took a look at the slipway beneath Saltash Bridge as we sailed north. By Cargreen the tide was sluicing in and we raced up through the busy moorings from there to Weir Quay.

After that we were pretty much alone on the river as it became less of the sea and more of the land. As the wind became blocked by the valley sides we drifted and then rowed past Cotehele and on to Calstock with its mighty viaduct over the river. We came alongside a pontoon which had a notice forbidding mooring without permission. There was no one around Calstock to permit, and the river was devoid of anything save a few canoes. The Tamar pub was right on the river so we were able to monitor the boat whilst we tucked into a celebratory last cruise dinner. This is a vibrant village with a lot of social activity in the riverside area near the pub. We spent the night moored to the pontoon.

Day's distance 24.2nm.

Total distance 91.7nm.

#### Thursday, September 18

A lovely single-track railway runs from Calstock station at the top of the viaduct along the river valley to Plymouth. I was up early for the 0605h train, leaving Jake aboard for a last day by himself. To halt the train one had to put a hand out as for stopping a bus. By 0605h five other commuters had joined me on the platform when a taxi/bus swept into the car park and scooped us up for the journey to Plymouth, there was a problem with either the train or its crew. Racing down very narrow hilly country lanes in the dark was the scariest part of this whole cruise and I had my eyes firmly closed at times. On the positive side the driver did get me to Plymouth for the 0706h connection on to Penzance, which I reached at 0915h.

That day Jake rowed *Lowly Worm* upstream with the tide and then down again to Cotehele. A National Trust worker at the quay tended the boat lines on the quickly-falling tide while he visited the gardens. He then sailed down river again to Saltash and cruised around until 1530h whereupon

we met at the slipway to recover *Lowly* for the journey back to North Devon and onward to Oxford.

Day's distance 8.7nm.

Total distance 100.4nm.

### For more information about the DCA

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Cheadle, Cheshire UK SK85JP

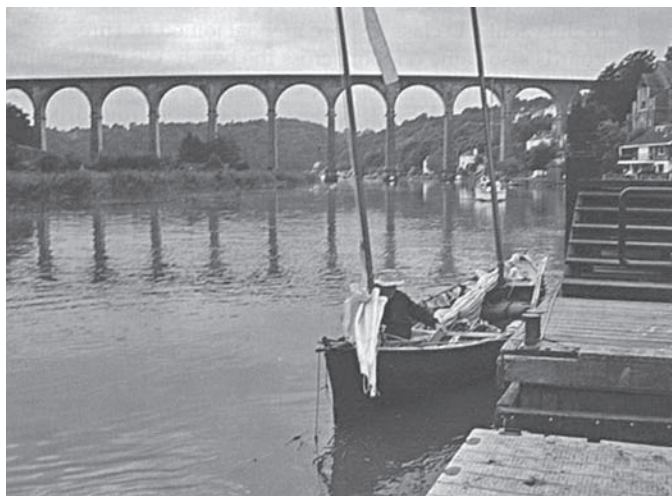
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There was only a breath of wind, but the moon was almost full. Davey Clark and I decided that conditions were good for a night sail in Squeteague Harbor. We rigged up our Beetle Cat, the *Bedlam Forever*, and waited for our friend Nick Ryan. He said he'd try to join us if he could leave work at the Dairy Mart early, but there was no sign of him at the appointed time, so we shoved off. We were eager to get going. We didn't feel bad about leaving without Nick because we would be able to see him and come over to pick him up should he come down to the dock. The tide was coming in, so it took a long time to head up the channel. It was almost calm and the sail barely filled out. But as long as the boom stayed to leeward, we made headway against the current.

We talked about everything and everybody. Out in the boat there was no one else to hear. We had no flashlight, but the big sail caught the moonlight dramatically and I think we were quite visible to any motorboats that might happen to come down the channel. There was no one else on the water anyway. A couple of times we caught a little breeze and the sheet straightened. We raised a few bubbles and splashing noises, and the boat's movement, though slow, seemed full of drama as we watched intently in the dim light. We didn't go far. We looked back to the dock to check for Nick a few times but didn't see him. After an hour we hadn't made it through half the channel to get out to Megansett Harbor. On a normal day sail, getting this far would have taken no more than 15 minutes.

So we made a slow, dignified tack around the first big bend in the channel. We were now to leeward of Lawrence Island. This was a frequent landing spot for us for picnics, beach combing and sand castle building.

Once after a junior race in Megansett Harbor, several boatloads of us stopped at Lawrence on the way back to Squeteague. Beetle Cats are shallow-draft boats. With the centerboards up, they draw less than a foot.

I tell my sailing students that all boats are girls. And, a smart sailor will treat her as such. In fact, most girls can grow up to become ladies, if treated accordingly.

There's more to the simile. Allow me to take you back, perhaps way back, to elementary school. It was probably 5th or 6th grade for most of us. One of those defining moments for just about every little boy, was that day when everyone was ushered into the gym, or cafeteria, and told that today was the day you were going to learn how to social dance. Defining.

Remember? The boys are sort of acting like boys, and not really paying attention. Most boys, at that age, still think that actually touching a girl can cause permanent disfigurement of some sort. They are all lost in that delicious sense of detachment until the teacher says those never-to-be-forgotten words, "Now, everybody, choose a partner..." And, that, my friends, is the absolute END of boyhood for the most of us. That's when the reality of that lonely "Y" chromosome first sets in.

If there was any doubt about the magnitude of this world changing event, the next shoe fell with a crash, as the teacher says, "Now, boys. Put your arm around your partner's waist... and, boys, YOU ARE GOING TO LEAD." At that point, there just ain't no turnin' back. And from that day forward, every man cub has this idea that he's the one in

## Cape Cod Harbors

### Beetle Cat Moon Music

By Rob Gogan

We beached to discharge our passengers. I kept *Bedlam* on the beach, but Davey anchored a little further out so his hull's bottom wouldn't get scratched. His father was intensely protective of the finish the hull to keep it in top racing form.

When we decamped on Lawrence, we feasted on some crackers, soft drinks and raisins we had brought. When we had finished, out came the pocketable instruments including kazoos, whistles and my harmonica. We played some familiar and boisterous songs like "You Are My Sunshine" and "Oh Susanna." There were no houses on Lawrence, so we could make as much of a racket as we pleased. My brother Mitch was a raisin addict. He had discovered that the empty boxes would whistle loudly if you blew into them. So after consuming all the raisins in his box, he stuffed it into his mouth, distending his lips around the box and blew hard, adding loud, crackling toots to the cacophony as we marched across the sand. Without any adults and only kids there, it was a little like "Lord of the Flies" with a happy ending.

Before we debarked that day, Davey had a sudden inspiration to leave a mark on the island and build a sculpture. He inspired us to gather a weathered driftwood pallet, some plastic and rags along the high-water mark and assemble them into a heap. We planted a long cedar pole we had scavenged into the sand, carrying aloft a colorful lobster pot float

that danced and tapped against the pole in the wind. I flattened the cracker box and found a piece of charcoal from an old driftwood fire. I wrote on the box's unprinted side, "Cataumet's Contribution to Idiocy" for a title and hung it on the rusty head of a nail on one of the pallets. We had fun imagining what the next beach landing picnickers would think of our creation.

But tonight, under the moon, there would be no visit to Lawrence, as it would be loaded with midges and mosquitoes. As we ghosted back to Squeteague, Davey hushed me once and said he thought he heard a thump on the hull. He said that his father had told him that big striped bass liked to come up near the surface and doze at night. At this speed, we wouldn't hurt them and maybe wouldn't even hear them. In any case, the rest of the return trip was silent. Back at the mooring, we saw Nick come down to the dock. After we had furled the sail, we rowed over to the dock and tied up.

"Julie never showed up so I had to stay till closing," Nick explained. We sat on the insect-free dock, far enough off the beach that the bugs would not get our scent, and talked about music and politics for a while. Then we went up to Davey's house up the path from the beach where we had snacks.

There was always action at the Clark's house. I liked all six of the Clarks. Davey and his siblings had an active interest in music. Tonight Davey's guitar had a broken string, but there were still a few songs he could play. I pulled a "G" keyed harmonica out of my pocket and puffed away. Nick shook the Clarks' tambourine. Davey's sister Beatrice commented that the moon was big tonight, inspiring him to sing a few verses of the Beatles' "Mr Moonlight." Nick turned out the lights and let the moonshine into the Clarks' dining room and started howling like a wolf in time to the music. The Beetle Cat hulls, spars and lines stood out in shadowed relief in the Squeteague Harbor moonlight.

## Boats Really Don't Make Sense

### The Girl Already Knows How to Dance

By Dan Rogers

charge. Even if almost every one of us knows in his heart that it just isn't so.

Here's the deal. While those little boys are struggling manfully with the one-two-three-four twists and twirls. While they THINK they're actually leading their partners across the dance floor like a herd of would be Fred Astaires; nobody is actually explaining the truth of this matter. You see, the girls already know how to dance. They even LIKE to dance. Most of 'em practice dancing. Most of 'em have been looking forward to this day. And, I ask you this, boys. If you really thought you were "leading," then why is it that the girls always seemed to get there first?

And, that my friends, is the truth about a sailboat. She already knows how to dance.

While you may have that tiller in one hand, mainsheet under your elbow, jib sheet cleated close to the other hand. Once you pick a general course and destination, you're pretty much just along for the ride. Yeah, like back in school when some of us were guilty of ape-like stomping on some defenseless feminine toes; you can steer your vessel into all manner of unfortunate choices. But, basically, the boat already knows how to dance.

Pretty much all the rest of sailing is listening to her moods, and treating her like the lady she is. The boat, that is. Because, even if you're just learning how to sail, it'll be OK. The boat already knows how.



## COMPASS ROSE REVIEW

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Carried away by my enthusiasm for a sailing vacation, I once talked an assorted foursome into sharing the charter of a yawl. Only one, known as the "Bull," was an experienced sailor. Two lawyers, the "Judge" and the "Justice," had never set foot aboard a sailing vessel. The fourth was my brother, Langhorne. Our idea was to take a four-day trip from City Island, New York, where the yawl was at anchorage, down Long Island Sound to Fisher's Island, a hundred miles to the east. With such a crew of eager amateurs, I suppose a certain amount of havoc was inevitable. But in all fairness, the vessel deserves a share of the blame for what occurred.

When, laden with groceries, beer and ice, we approached her at City Island, she loomed impressively against the Manhattan sunset. To our untutored eyes, she had the long, low, rakish look of a racing craft. We didn't notice, not then anyway, that the sheer line had flattened to level, probably from drooping bow and stern during untold years of yard storage.

Her age was problematical. A silver plate in the main cabin designated her as winner of the Block Island race in 1898. Inoperative carbide-gas lighting fixtures adorned the ceiling. Worn, red mohair cushions padded the bunks. There was an all-pervading odor, like the smell in the basement of a museum, old, sincere and earthy. Novices that we were we did not smell a rat. Instead we were struck with admiration at the bright paint and varnished trim of our venerable craft.

We were particularly impressed by two pieces of inspirational calendar art framed under glass, which decorated the port and starboard bulkheads in the main cabin. One depicted a rosy, chubby infant sitting between the paws of a large, hairy dog. It was titled "Security." The other showed Christ chained to a stone cross, mounted on a reef in the midst of a force-six gale against a background of forbidding black squall clouds, laced with lightning flashes. This rendering was captioned "Faith." Little did we know how much of that commodity we would need before long.

All hands were delighted with the charter as we stowed our gear, provisioned the icebox and made ready to set sail with a favoring tide and a westerly breeze. The moon came up full that night. With our vessel's huge, gray, gaff-rigged mainsail and two jibs and mizzen spread to the breezes, we glided majestically down the Sound looking for all the world like a Currier and Ives print. This was yachting at its best, under ideal conditions: favoring wind, no sea, and a full moon!

We must have presented a brave spectacle, at which even Captain Hornblower might have found difficulty in stifling a smirk of approval, as we proceeded eastward at five knots toward our destination.

By dawn the next morning we were already east of Saybrook, Connecticut, still cruising under ideal conditions. The uninitiated lawyers were greatly impressed with sailing as a medium of transportation and after a good night's sleep wondered where sailboats had been all their lives. We did not suspect that we were traveling in a fool's paradise. We had no warning of the fouling up we were in for on the return voyage.

We sailed into Fisher's Harbor with the nautical aplomb of a Captain Hornblower and went ashore for two days of sybaritic living on a golf course, tennis court and bathing beach. When I rounded up the crew for the re-

## Disasters on the Deep

1955 — Author Unknown

turn trip, there was a freshening southwester blowing. As we rowed out to the anchorage, I warned our sea lawyers that once we left the shelter of the harbor we might be thrown around a bit. I advised them to stow their golf clubs and tennis racquets and to secure their suitcases containing shoreside finery such as white tuxedos and flannels. Lulled by the smooth sailing we had had on our trip east, they paid no attention, simply dropped their sports equipment and unlatched suitcases on their bunks and came on deck, drinks in hand, to admire the scenery and share the exhilaration of making sail.

As soon as we had hoisted the reefed main and working jib, the Bull and I knew we had a sockful of wind and then some. Gusts from the shore whipped the heavy boom like a fishing rod, banging the traveler back and forth with awe inspiring violence. I told Langhorne to go forward and take in the slack as we sailed up on the anchor line and to give us a call when the anchor was immediately underfoot for help in raising it. Everything went according to plan except that the anchor would not come free. Finally, all five of us were on the foredeck, straining to break out the anchor, which felt as if it had fouled a continent.

In the meantime, unnoticed by any of us, the four-purchase mainsheet tackle had whipped itself several times around the spokes of the wheel in a Gordian tangle. Suddenly, and without warning, the anchor let go. I rushed aft to the wheel as the ancient yacht heeled over broadside to the wind and started off on a starboard tack with rapidly increasing speed, her bowsprit pointed directly amidships of a 60' Sewanaka schooner moored fifty yards ahead in the close confines of the harbor. Grabbing the wheel, I found that it was locked tight in the grip of the tangled mainsheet. "Get a knife! Cut the sheet rope!" I screamed in horror as I watched us rushing toward disaster.

The Judge dove below for a knife but hit his head on the hatch coaming with a dull thud, and fell like a poled ox into a cabin bunk. The rest of the crew stood transfixed, as we proceeded with ponderous momentum toward the inevitable disaster looming now only about twenty yards off our bowsprit.

Two white-uniformed oafs on the schooner, polishing rags hanging limply from red hands, stared immovably at our onrushing battering ram of a bowsprit. We could see the whites of their eyes before, by some divine intervention, the wind suddenly let up for a few seconds. Four pairs of hands frantically tore loose the slackened sheet rope from the spokes of the steering wheel. With wheel hard over, the bow swung to windward, but by this time we were so close to the schooner that the tip of the bowsprit plucked her foremast shroud cables like giant harp strings, shaking her standing rigging like a toy. Our stern counter grazed her bow as we were about to complete a 180-degree turn straight downwind to leave Fisher's Harbor.

"That was the closest call I've ever..." the Bull was interrupted by the shrill, hysterical scream of an air whistle. Looking under the main boom, we observed with horror another impending disaster of even greater proportions than the near miss of the moored schooner. Hugging the extreme side of the

narrow channel was a 100' power yacht coming up the harbor. The owner's party of three veiled elderly dames in steamer chairs lined the rail at the exact level of our main boom, which resembled a telephone pole. As we turned downwind we paid out the mainsheet until the boom hit the shrouds. With hard over wheel, it was still highly problematic whether our boat would turn fast enough to clear the power yacht, which had now come to a dead stop in the channel, screaming helplessly the way powerboats do when in distress. We all held our breaths in horror as our yawl curved lethargically downwind and passed the power yacht's bow so close that a piece of newspaper would not have fit between the sides of the two vessels.

"Look out for a jibe," screamed the Bull, who was at the wheel. Glancing at the mainsail, I saw the ominous bubble of air behind it. The mainsheet tackle went slack. If that huge boom flopped over in an uncontrolled jibe, those old ladies would be decapitated. Three of us clawed with bare hands for the sheet tackle. The boom came amidships, dragging us over like flies. But another providential wind shift slapped it back again, and in another few seconds we were practically in the clear, though not quite.

A beautifully finished mahogany tender hung in davits on the port quarter of the power yacht. Our port shrouds just missed clearing the davit. Instead, the cable tangled momentarily, jerked free, and slid along the gunwale of the suspended tender. The quick-release tackle on the forward falls holding the tender to the forward davit tripped, and the tender's bow dropped with a splash. A cascade of cleaning gear, oars, crates of fresh vegetables and seat cushions, which had been stored in the tender, spilled out into the harbor. But we were already on our way, speeding down the channel like a frightened goose. Marine insurance would have to take care of this brush with disaster.

"Here's the knife," called a shaky voice from below, and the Judge appeared in the companionway, eyes glazed, still wondering what had hit him.

"You're way behind, Judge. We've already had an even closer shave since you went below. But," I reassured him, "it'll be straight sailing from now on."

We rounded the bend in the harbor, hardened up to the wind and headed west for the open sound, anticipating the wind's song, the flung spray and the wheel's kick. "High diddle-de-dee, the sailor's life for me!" But about that time the first swells from the open sound, driven by a twenty-knot, smoky southwester, lifted the bow of our ancient craft, and she plunged sluggishly into it, each dip throwing green water and heavy spray over the foredeck and cabin.

Suddenly there was a cry from below followed by a crash of splintering wood. I rushed to look, and a harrowing scene met my eyes. A fifty-pound cake of ice had flung itself against the icebox door from the inside. The screws, pulling out easily from the old, mossy wood, had loosened the hardware, and the door had shot from its moorings. Milk bottles, a choice cut of meat and everything else from the icebox had spilled out onto the floor and were churning around in a wave of seawater that had come rushing in. The kerosene can with the potato off the spout had gotten mixed up in the melee, along with some white flannels, golf and tennis balls and several white tuxedos and assorted vegetables.



As I watched stupefied, the cake of ice tangled with the legs of the cabin table and snapped them off like matchsticks, then continued on its way, thundering around the cabin like a battering ram. The Justice, who had gone below to take off his shore clothes and was stark naked, leaped from bunk to bunk trying to keep clear of the flotsam and jetsam, especially the iceberg, which could easily break a leg as it catapulted the length of the after cabin with each plunge.

"We're sinking!" he cried in horror as another fifty gallons of seawater flooded into the cabin from some wide open space forward. The forward hatch cover had pulled free of its hold-down bolts from the rotten coaming on the first plunge into the swell. The wooden cover floated over the side, leaving a 3' square opening ready to receive each sea.

"Go forward topside and secure that hatch opening somehow, or we'll sink!" I shouted to Langhorne. The Bull was at the wheel so I dove down into the cabin with the idea of stuffing a headsail bag into the gaping opening or finding some canvas to cover it. Then I heard the frantic cry, "Man overboard!" Rushing on deck again, I saw my brother dangling over the side with one hand holding a cotton line laced with a dozen bronze ring-like fittings, which had served as carriers for the cabin top lifeline. When he had grabbed the lifeline to work his way forward, the fittings pulled out of the cabin top, leaving him with a loose rope end in one hand, the other end precariously attached to the last rotten fitting. We grabbed for the rope and pulled him aboard, half full of water, just as the Bull at the wheel invoked the Deity and voiced a new development. "I can't hold her, the rudder's come off!" he yelled.

Incredulous, I leaped to the plunging stern, gripped the mizzen boom and peered under the counter. The rudder was still there, but it was flopping aimlessly from side to side with each wave. A quick inspection of the wheel box revealed that the wheel bearings were so loose that the pinion gear was disengaging itself from the quadrant rack, allowing the rudder to bang back and forth ineffectively.

Three men went forward to do something about the man-sized hole in the foredeck, while two of us wrestled with the steering gear. We discovered that we could steer a little bit after packing cockpit seat cushions over the wheel axle, closing the wheel box and sitting on it. The weight of the helmsman forced the pinion gear down on the quadrant far enough to engage the gears.

As the integrity of the vessel seemed to be depreciating by the minute, we decided to seek refuge by returning to Fisher's Harbor under power. Miraculously, the two-cycle, turn-of-the-century engine started and we got enough way on to head into wind and sea with the idea of getting the mainsail down and in stops. While Langhorne and the Judge worked forward on the wildly plunging bow trying to secure that hatch opening, the Justice and I made a dramatic effort to lower the main and catch the violently swinging boom amidships without being killed in the process. The halyards were let go and the great sail fluttered down into the lazy jacks. But at this moment the mounting water in the bilge drowned out the engine, the yawl paid off broadside out of control and the halfflowered sail filled, flapping and billowing.

To make matters worse, one loose lazy jack caught under the corner of the cabin skylight, and as the boom flopped to leeward, twisted the wood frame so violently that the

plate glass cracked and fell in splinters into the ankle-deep water swishing around in the cabin. The Judge, who had been forward below helping to secure the open hatch, at this moment dashed aft for the companionway in a paroxysm of seasickness. He let out a cry of pain and fell into the water on the cabin floor, blood from a cut in his foot rapidly reddening the pool already clouded with milk, kerosene, wearing apparel, tennis racquets and a half dozen tennis balls, plus the thundering piece of ice, which was still at large.

We lifted his bare foot above the bilge water and saw that a splinter of plate glass had severed an artery in his foot and that first aid was imperative. The Judge promptly became violently ill, which made little difference to the cabin environment at that point.

The Justice abandoned his efforts with the wildly flapping main to render first aid to his colleague below. It was up to the Bull and myself, with Langhorne, to try to save the ship. With no power, failing steering gear, a sinking boat, a mainsail out of control and a big sea running, we quickly abandoned the idea of trying to beat back to Fisher's Island and decided to sail downwind for New London under jib alone.

As soon as we had captured the main and turned the boat downwind the situation seemed to improve. The Justice had a tourniquet on the Judge's foot, and it looked as though we would make port if the ancient planking of our yacht did not open up any more and if we could keep the pump work-

ing. The hand pump, however, soon sucked a golf ball into the intake, which we found to be completely inaccessible. From then on, like countless luckless mariners before us, we were on our own, fighting Davy Jones with a bucket as our sole method of stemming the mounting tide in the cabin.

By the time we approached the New London breakwater, the boat had settled deeply, but we felt the trip was in the bag. Refuge was only a mile ahead! But the crowning ignominy was still to come. Just as we passed the breakwater and a Coast Guard cutter belatedly came alongside to look us over, our dinghy, which had been towing in wild rushes as it ran with the steep seas behind us, suddenly ran straight up on the stern counter, impaling itself on the mizzen boom. There it hung, lifting and dipping with the waves, presenting a ludicrous and unseamanlike spectacle.

An hour later, I was in a phone booth calling the owner of our ill-starred vessel in New York. "We'll all walk home in bare feet along the shore before we'll take your miserable moss-covered bucket to sea again," I shouted indignantly, after I'd told him of his craft's shortcomings and his moral liability as charterer of such a derelict.

"I keep hoping she'll sink, so I can collect the insurance," he admitted quite candidly. "Just leave her there. Maybe she'll sink on the next charter."

I hung up, vowing I'd never charter a boat again, even if it did win a race more than fifty years ago.



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August 18

I can walk. This morning I first stepped from a real bed, rising vertically to my feet, no sliding seat in sight and, as if in a bad take-out from *Planet of the Apes*, simian shuffled towards a real bathroom with running (hot) water. Yes, I miss my boat, but it's good to be home.

First, here are some key statistics:

13 days on the water.

452 miles rowed.

3.898mph average speed.

Minimum mileage in a day: 7.5 (impenetrable headwind in NJ).

Maximum mileage in a day: 62 (pure mad-dog determination to get off the frigging Delaware River).

Average daily mileage: 34.8;

Swappings: 2.

Capsizes: 0.

Gatorade consumed: Incalculable.

Gatorade bottles "refilled" (with my own "special" blend that I'm thinking of labeling "Second Time Around". Think of it, Gatorade's marketing buzz is, "Is it in you?" STA's will be, "It was in me!") dozens.

Mechanical/equipment issues: 0.

Acts of unconditional kindness by friends and total strangers: countless.

Pounds lost: 10.

Fat converted to something else: Yes, but don't expect to see me on a calendar.

So, where do I start? How about at the end?

Legend has it that Gen. McArthur had to jump off the landing craft a dozen times for the press when he indeed finally "returned," and Fox News asked me to get back in the boat... back on that granite-hard seat on which I'd been sitting for 109.8 hours... to re-enact my arrival to a crowd disappointingly even more animated for the presence of the cameras. I felt asleep before the news that night, so I have no idea if it played or, if so, how it played, but at least I played.

During my first full day ashore in two weeks, my gratitude to Peg, to Kathy, and to scores of other friends and family is commingled with a certain sadness in missing my boat. Today Peg and I placed it in a safe spot in a neighbor's back yard, where it will stay until I take it back up to its home waters of Lake George. It has been a good... no, it's been a great... horse. It is an heroic craft, because without fanfare it enabled this amateur to complete a trip that would otherwise have been beyond his capabilities. I cannot think of a vessel better suited to allow one to take a trip like this, safely. Our world would be a better place indeed if the parents of the countless kids I saw joyriding on jet skis had, instead (and for less money), purchased an Adirondack Guideboat for their kid, put him in it with a bedroll, a couple of sandwiches, and a jug of water, and told him (or her) to get lost for a couple of days.

I love my boat. It saved my bacon more than once and I'd have been overjoyed if it could have joined us knocking down Tater Tots at Regi's last night. Tomorrow I'll give it a good scrub and wax, but not so thorough that I remove the (dare I say "sexy"?) scars she gathered along the way. She's not a show boat any longer, but she carries a plucky kind of been-there, done-that patina that we all hope Condi might wear in a few years.

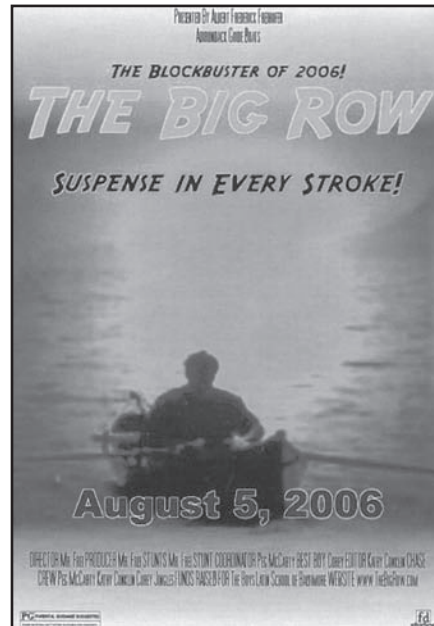
OK, time for a "Most Heroic" episode: Bill Flammer is a Loomis Chaffee Trustee/colleague who, with his wife Terri, opened his home to me in Ocean City. They hosed

## The Big Row

### 452 Miles in an Adirondack Guideboat

#### Part 4 Aftermath

By Al Freihofer



me off, fed me royally, and I thoroughly enjoyed their company and appreciated their encouragement. Bill was up a 5:45am the next morning to roust me out and see me off and, after packing the boat with the two days of provisions I thought I would need on the Delaware, I bid him a thankful adieu. Two hours later I remembered that I'd forgotten to pack the enormous roast beef sandwich that was to have been the core of my evening meal. It was still on the top shelf of his 'fridge... but there was no turning back. The tide, especially around Cape May, waits for no man... nor for any Wa-Wa Supreme Roast Beef Sandwich, even though, truth be told, it should.

I rowed on, lamenting my haste and wondering how to re-manage my meager stores. More than three hours into my day I picked up a shout in the distance, over my shoulder. When you're rowing, everything important is over your shoulder. Ahead of me, standing on the wharf of a fish processing plant, of all places, Bill was waving a Wa-Wa Supreme Roast Beef Sandwich in the air like a game show contestant. He had driven from Ocean City to Cape May, sandwich in a cooler bag, and he had patiently waited for me to show. Did I already mention unconditional acts of kindness? Bill, how can I thank you? Later you will learn how that sandwich gave me the strength to do what had to be done on the Delaware at a time of peril.

I have to mention Drifters Cove and Cheryl's Split Ends in Chesapeake City, Maryland. Chesapeake City is as charming as it is devoid of any place to buy portable bottled refreshments. No Wa-Wa, no 7-11, no retail food establishments at all... just a charming community of shops and boutiques... an artists' colony and retreat that had shooed the neon out of town.

I was desperate for provisions. I asked a passer-by where I might find some Gatorade or such, and he said, "Go to Drifters Cove and Cheryl's Split Ends; they'll have what you need." I went. I stood at the door and looked in. It was a charming gift shop/hair salon combo place... delightful for what it was, but not a place in which I would order up a Gatorade. I turned around, crestfallen. I couldn't hit the Chesapeake with an empty boat. I stopped a kid.

"Young man, when you're thirsty and in need of refreshment, where do you go?"

"Go see Cheryl and Cheryl, mister. They've got what you need."

I was desperate. I returned to the storefront and again peered in the window, hesitating. How comfortable would you be walking into a car dealership and asking which aisle might hold the pasta sauce? A pet store to find metric drill bits? A Starbuck's to order stuffed-crust pizza? I mean, come on. It's a gift shop hair salon. Drifters Cove and Cheryl's Split Ends is a gift shop hair salon. A curious combo, I grant you, and Cheryl and Cheryl pull it off surprisingly well but nothing about it promised yet another miracle in the back room.

The kid was right. They had what I needed, Cheryl and Cheryl, angels of Chesapeake City and augmenters of the Big Row, I thank you for your grace at my incredulity. You girls have got it goin' on. In retrospect I suspect that had I asked for pasta sauce, metric drill bits, or stuffed-crust pizza, Cheryl and Cheryl might have cocked their eyebrows at one another, nodded imperceptibly, and taken me to yet another back room. If you're ever in Chesapeake City, go visit them. And don't be afraid to ask.

August 19

Ah, what a luxury to be reclining in a soft chair with the Sunday *Times*, a hot cup of coffee in hand, cares of weather and waves in the not-so-distant past.

Truth be told, I'm going through a bit of withdrawal as I reflect that a week ago I still had the Delaware ahead of me... and two weeks ago I was commencing my second full day on the Hudson. The boat and oars are now oiled and waxed... the calluses are already softening... I've rediscovered the short walk to 7-11 and all of its vices. Sigh. I did, however, get to the gym yesterday, lest I too soon lose all vestiges of the unintended benefits of my adventure. I beat on the rowing machine like a drum.

As I peruse the business section of the *Times* this morning, however, I realize that my recent headlines of experiential discovery are not theirs. While the *Times* is silent on the matter, my row has revealed a true center section of the US economy: an activity that fuels our continued supremacy in economic affairs, one that certainly plays a material contributing role in the stability, such as it is, of our culture. I speak of fishing.

Let me be clear. I don't fish. Frankly, I just don't get it. But I can testify that the capital investment and human resource dedicated to fishing must exceed that of the automotive, steel making, and fast-food industries combined. Sorta like golf, I guess.

I passed thousands of people, no, tens of thousands, sitting in watercraft of every sort equipped with sophisticated electronics, devilishly clever equipment, and attendant life-support material, all acquired for the single purpose of either catching a fish



or, perhaps, for getting away from a spouse. Hundreds of times I would row gently past this population and ask, "Any luck?" or, "Are they biting?" or even an optimistic, "What's for dinner tonight?"

Not once in 452 miles of inquiry was I met with the sight of a fish or even of an expression of hope. This is a very glum group. Whatever they are doing isn't working. My tribulations on the Delaware inadvertently put more fish in my boat than I saw in the aggregation of all other boats I passed on my trip. They sit in the blazing sun in rowboats, center-consoles, "sport-fishing" boats, pontoon boats, runabouts, ski boats, cruisers, sailboats, and charter boats. They stare blankly into the water, sometimes jerking the line (either on purpose, or perhaps as a result of the startled reflex one experiences as one wakes up?), waiting... waiting... waiting.

I not once got a happy response from a fisher-person in 13 days... much as I have rarely met a "happy" golfer. But make no mistake about it: the equipment and infrastructure necessary to keep this hapless fleet at sea employs millions and re-circulates billions of dollars. I should, in retrospect, perhaps be grateful for their practice of their insanity. Indirectly, it keeps a lot of us fed, if not with fish.

It would be small-minded to lampoon fishing without taking a shot at myself, so let me get off my high horse and confess my own act of stupidity on my last full day on the Chesapeake, the day before my arrival in Baltimore.

I left my chart of the Chesapeake on the dock at the C&D Canal. "OK, so I just head south and try not to miss the largest city in Maryland, one of the largest ports on the eastern seaboard." This is the kind of scintillating self-talk one has after 12 days alone in a small boat.

As the day progressed it became clear that I would not make Baltimore on Wednesday night. There was an island several miles ahead. The water was perfectly flat, the tide was with me; making it before sunset was a lock. I pictured myself settling in with a hale and hearty fishing community (hopefully not a glum one), regaling them with tales of my adventure and, perhaps, getting some pointers on a best approach to Baltimore the next day. The island glowed in a beautiful sunset, and even from a distance I could see the reflectivity of numerous signs around its perimeter. "Welcome" signs, perhaps, pointing the way to refuge on the other side, perhaps a 7-11, or even a Starbucks.

There is no small irony in the idea that well before you can read a sign that says, "Danger! Unexploded Ordinance! Entry Strictly Forbidden," you are already in danger. As I was to learn three more times that night in complete darkness, the umbrella of the Aberdeen Proving Ground stretches over vast expanses of land and water in this part of the Chesapeake; was that a rock my oar just swept... or the casing of an unexploded 500lb bomb? Yes, my stout boat is made of Kevlar, and isn't Kevlar used in the fabrication of bullet-proof vests? False logic, false logic. Aberdeen is big, I surmised, because it's where they test The Big Ones.

Needless to say, when I finally touched shore at 11:30pm on a beach devoid of signs and shell casings, I was much relieved. I slept the sleep of the reprieved... or of the hopelessly stupid.

Lessons learned?

Don't leave the charts on the dock.

Not all signs are large enough to serve the purpose intended.

Some mud flats and rocks generate a "pucker factor" all out of proportion to others.

There is much wildlife in Aberdeen that can't read signs.

Well, I'm looking forward to enjoying this day... but I do miss the water.

## August 22

### Lemonade from Lemons

My hardest day actually started the night before, August 18. That morning I had left Stone Harbor, New Jersey, an idyllic enclave on the Intracoastal. I hit the Cape May Canal late in the morning, five hours (and 19 miles) into my day. I transited it with no difficulty, but all the way through I wondered what conditions would prevail at the other end of the Canal: Delaware Bay, the 16 mile-wide mouth of the Delaware River. Much like the dental appointment that one just can't defer, the Delaware had been on my mind since August 5. Last March, in fact, I had stood on the shore of the Cape May Canal jetty and had seen The Big Waters, felt the lash of a strong west wind, and hoped that my emergence in August at that very spot would take place in more benign conditions. It would soon be time to darken the dentist's door.

My hopes of March were answered. I was greeted with a gentle southwesterly wind, delightful rollers headed my way up the bay, and a slack tide. I had a window of opportunity to make some serious headway on the body of water that had concerned me most, indeed the water that was most oceanic in its proportions and possibilities and I dug in to make the most of it.

After a few miles of sandy strand and delightful camps, the eastern shore of the Delaware morphs into vast expanses of grassland and swamp; no homes, no beach, no docks, no towns, no boats... no nothin'. As darkness fell after a gratifying 46 mile day, the wind rose sharply and veered from the west, presenting me with the broadside waves that would be the primary challenge throughout the next day. After 12 hours and 30 minutes in the seat, it was time to pull up. A low tide offered a small stretch of sand onto which I fell, exhausted and cramped, and there is where I wolfed down the Wa-Wa Supreme Roast Beef Sandwich. Ever see the lions tearing into the gazelle on "Animal Planet"? You've got the picture...

My solitary sandy spot was about 4' square and just above the water's edge; the tide was coming in, and I knew that within the hour I would lose it entirely. I used the clean, secure footing of the sand to reconfigure the boat for the night, moving items and hardware fore and aft to make room for my sleeping bag and a tarp in the middle. I pulled the boat up as far as I could into the tall grass, fell into the bag, and was immediately asleep, cradling my oars. Honest. I love those cherry oars.

It was the gentle rocking of the boat that woke me up. I was on my back, and a gorgeous waning amber moon lit the boat and the stalks of grass surrounding me. I could hear waves lapping against the boat... I could feel the flexing of the hull under their pressure... and as lay on my back, stalks of glittering grass slowly marched past the boat in a surreal, stately parade. I was moving, albeit slowly, surrounded by the vegetation, suspended in the water, too tired to do anything but enjoy the spectacle and fight the heavy lids.

I awoke before dawn... not a bad night's sleep... and sat up in the boat. I was sitting in a small grassy room with a roof open to the stars. I stood up in the boat and faced the river. I was 75' from shore, high in the grass, where the tide had deposited my cradle. It would be a muddy slog to get the boat back to shore, but I thanked my good fortune for the good night's sleep. The strong west wind had kept the bugs down... and yet I anticipated that it would not be my friend in the coming day. Thus began my "Hardest Day", after a night in the boat that was almost magical in its beauty.

I launched from the sandy spit that had blessedly reappeared from under the tide. It was a tough launch into the surf, but with some good timing and moves absorbed from watching Mary Lou Retton in the Olympics, I was underway before 7.

The eastern shore of the southern Delaware River is very shallow... vast stretches of 2'-3' depths are typical. In water so shallow, a strong wind will build a special kind of wave. Before this trip I thought waves that capped had certain rhythms... rise, cap, subside, rise, cap, subside. Lady Delaware presented me her version of a Kiddie Water Park from Hell. The waves came at me broadside in steady, predictable rows about 3' high, but the crests didn't break and collapse; the shallow depths, I think, sustained the crests and they just kept on coming, continuously breaking without collapsing. Perfect for the kid at the water park, bad for a boat which, fully loaded, presents at most 6" of freeboard.

I made only three miles in my first two hours, and that was accomplished only through total concentration in the timing of my strokes and the constant adjustment of the heading of the boat. The inevitable momentary lapse in concentration cost me dearly; I was hit by a cascade that exceeded the length of the boat and was immediately sitting in a water tub full to the gunwales... with fish. Yes, fish. I'm about to lose everything in the boat and I'm focused on the fish. See, I don't especially like fish, unless it's a property prepared Chilean Sea Bass with some nice buttered asparagus on the side. I saw no such fish in the boat.

It's a credit to the boat that it didn't roll. I climbed into the Wave Pool, dragged the boat to the swamp, and bailed. The fish found their own way out. I didn't lose anything, but it would be a while 'til I slept in anything dry. Only Kathy's transistor radio, my constant companion, was dealt a fatal blow; for the rest of the trip it would emit frequent farting sounds which, truth be told, rivaled in breadth and depth of thought much of the talk radio I had been listening to.

Back on the water, I resolved to call it a day at 20 miles, even if it meant another night in the swamp. Within another hour (only a mile later), another lapse, another swamping (same fish?), another slog to the swamp... and even by noon, 20 miles looked foolishly optimistic. So where is the lemonade in this story?

The Biggest Lesson Learned on my row is that distance rowing is physically challenging, to be sure, but it's every bit as much a head game. It's cerebral. It's great physical exertion that happens in slow motion, giving one plenty of time to contemplate self and situation and surroundings. But it was the periodic audit of self that would tip the day.

At some point around noon, I got angry. Not angry at the river, which astounded me with its size and variability, nor at my circum-

stance, which was purely elective, but rather with myself. I was angry at having set a 20 mile goal that would put me in the swamp for another night (no more Wa-Wa Supreme Roast Beef Sandwiches, and running low on fluids) before I had reached the end of my endurance. I determined that I would row that day until I could row no more. It was time to reach down to see what was there. At that moment I became capability-oriented, not time or distance oriented. Screw the GPS. Put it away. Just keep rowing.

I kept at it. The wind abated a bit by late afternoon, and soon, for the first time, the Delaware shore emerged in the west. I made a six mile dash into the wind (at last, no more demonic firemen trying to fill the boat using firehoses!) for the promise of the shelter its lee might provide, and I was rewarded for this gamble by glassy water at sunset.

I arrived at the mouth of the C&D Canal after dark, utterly exhausted. I saw no spot to pull in for the night, and I knew that the Coast Guard might have qualms about letting a rowboat through the canal the next day. No one was around, the tide was again slack, and I knew there was a place to pull in 13 miles into the canal. At this point I was experiencing a kind of euphoria (exhaustion? dehydration?) at having exceeded my 20 mile goal by 29 miles, the waters of greatest concern now blessedly behind me. But a nighttime passage of the C&D? It sounded stupid even at the time, but sometimes the stupidity in front of you looks like the optimal path.

I had been warned of the tidal effect of the C&D canal. When the tide gets moving, its effects are dramatically amplified in the Canal... far exceeding the over-the-ground speed I could sustain, even when fresh, in my boat. That night, when it started to move after slack, it would be building against me. In a perverse pilot to a game show entitled "Beat the Tide," I headed in, slinking past the Coast Guard station like a U-boat leaving Brest in 1944, knowing that my window of opportunity was short. The prospect of investing hours and scarce calories only to be flushed out of the Canal loomed large. It would be a race.

As the tide began to build, my over-the-ground progress became absurdly slow and very, very painful. I knew that if I lagged before 13 miles, there would come that moment when my maximum effort would yield less speed than the building current. The alternative of The Flush was too awful to contemplate. The miles passed in slow motion; I'd by now placed the GPS back in sight and furtive flashes of light showed my speed declining despite maximum effort... 2.8mph... 1.9mph... all the while the illusion of the current going the other way making it seem that I was flying.

The freighters making nighttime passages through the canal beheld the image of an idiot in an unlit boat rowing madly against the tide, a sight as amusing as it must have been cause for concern; weren't we at Amber Alert? But I hugged the side of the canal where the heavier traffic could not go and where the current was less strong. My fatigue was overwhelming, yet I had no choice but to continue. I sang every Tommy James and the Shondells song I knew, and I have no idea why. "My Baby Does the Hanky Panky" got me thinking about what I must have thought hanky panky was when I was 13, or what Tommy meant us to think. It was enough to get me through.

In retrospect, I wish I'd summoned Portia's "mercy" speech from "The Merchant of Venice" or Wordsworth's "The World is Too Much With Us." After all, I'm an English teacher, and you'd think I'd have summoned something a little more profound than Tommy James and the Shondells in this time of stress. Sheesh.

I reached the Chesapeake Marina at 12:45am. I drank a gallon of water from the first hose I could find, climbed into my wet steeping bag on the dock next to the boat, and slept the sleep of the dead. 62 miles, 17 hours. Not bad for a 20-mile day. It was my hardest day and, I think, my best.

### August 24 The Stalking

I'll tell you about my Barnegat Bay day? The Bay is an enormous body of water inside the Intracoastal in New Jersey, the setting for what I'll refer to as The Stalking.

It was about noon on Saturday, the 12<sup>th</sup>... one week and a day into my journey. I was just abreast of Barnegat Light, where a significant outlet to the ocean feeds the bay. The water was moderately calm, the sun high, and I had a nice breeze from astern. I was in a rhythm, a kind of zone, and the strokes were coming easily. I was grateful for the prospect of reaching the lower, more sheltered stretch of the Intracoastal that afternoon with relative ease. That's when I saw it: a large dark shape, maybe 20' directly behind the boat, coming on slowly. No fin broke the water, but that didn't stop my imagination from instantaneously kicking into high gear. *Jaws*, *Jaws 2*, *Jaws 3*, *Shark Week*, *Stay Out of the Water Week*... all of the vivid Discovery Channel and Animal Planet shark footage I had ever seen came roaring to life in technicolor/surround sound as if I were dragging a big screen behind the boat.

Unfortunately, I also immediately recalled experiments performed by marine biologists off of the Farallon Islands in California. They tested the attractiveness of various shapes to the Great White population which thrives there, concluding that surfers are especially interesting to sharks because the shapes of their boards evoke the shape of seals, their favorite dish. Any child can see that my boat, when viewed from below, carries a stunningly similar silhouette. I didn't need a child in the boat to remind me of this unhappy correlation; my Inner Child was perfectly capable of raising the point, and I couldn't quiet him down.

To compound my concerns, I had been chewing on Slim Jims at this point of the row. For those of you unfamiliar with this popular yet mysterious meat snack, here's how it goes: You bite off a piece, chew it with determination, and after you have absorbed the nutritive chemicals and ersatz meat products contained therein, you are left with a wad of pulp that cannot be chewed further and should most definitely not be swallowed. So... I'd been spitting wads of masticated Slim Jims over the side for some time, which my Inner Child immediately translated into... yes... chum.

So I had the shape... I was trailing the scent... and now I had some mysterious and unwelcome company.

The shape weaved from left to right behind the boat, then approached to within 10' or so, then it would disappear for a moment and reappear further astern again. It soon became more curious, accelerating close to the stern and veering off to one side or another.

While things may appear closer in a rear view mirror, I was already facing backwards, and whatever it was needed no magnification; had I been in a kayak, I might have remained blissfully unaware of its presence.

I was praying that it would break the surface for air; I'd have gleefully thrown my last Slim Jim to a Flipper, and my wallet, too. Yet the shadow didn't broach the surface... nor did I see the dreaded fin. But whatever it was, was there, and it was large, and I learned that a simple shape in the water can convey a most unsettling primal malevolence.

Then... after maybe five or six more passes past the beam of the boat, it was gone. Only then did I begin to feel the effects of the drama. An immediate threat tends to galvanize you; you focus on the here and now, which in my case was the maintenance of a steady rhythm and doing everything possible to mimic the movements of a healthy, formidable, unpanicked creature... anything other than the hapless, thrashing seals off the Faratons. My "shadow", whatever it was, had apparently lost interest, but for the next hour the adrenalin was flowing freely... and I tucked the remaining Slim Jims under the seat for more confined waters.

I can't tell you that I saw a shark. Whatever it was never revealed itself. When I recounted this tale to my dear friend Brian, he sounded skeptical. "Are you sure it wasn't the shadow of your own boat? Maybe a shadow created by passing clouds, or water variations?"

Brian, I don't have to see the car to hear it coming. I don't have to taste the coffee to smell it perking. I don't have to hear the siren to know that I should soon grope for my license and registration. And, believe me, I didn't have to see a fin to feel a presence. I can only say that I wish you'd been with me. Oh, how I wish that you'd been with me. There, and on the Delaware. I love you that much.

In retrospect, I feel a bit silly that I felt such post-encounter anxiety from something just a click above an apparition. Perhaps this is indeed a testament to the power of the cocktail of a vivid imagination stirred with graphic media images. Yet I've always subscribed to Woody Allen's line, "Whenever I'm in the water, I feel like I'm on the menu."

### August 29 Heroic Support

The Big Row is long over, but I want to shine light on the real heroes of my row... the support team which aided me through conception, planning, execution, and an all-too-grand entrance into the Inner Harbor. I wish I could have each of you at my boat right now with a laundry marker, inscribing your names and perhaps a witticism; you guys were the fuel in my tank.

First, there's Peg. When this trip was a gleam in my eye, I initially saw a bit of a cloud in hers... yet she has been nothing but supportive and positive from Day One.

And Kathy, vaunted Blog Mistress and logistician extraordinaire. Kathy is responsible for virtually everything on the blog, and her enthusiasm for the project, for the community it has gathered, and her unending creativity have made this a truly communal event.

Peg and Kathy ran some logistics from shore as well, meeting me in Staten Island, monitoring my progress under the Verrazano Bridge, helping me through the morass of Sandy Hook, and even arranging a meeting, in Highlands, New Jersey, with the delightful Connie Cottrell and her family. Connie was



the national champion in Jersey Speed Skiffs in 1970; I now own her boat, and just tipping a drink with someone who has forgotten more about something than you will ever learn is, for me, downright enthralling.

Along the way, various characters popped up who made the trip a joy. Of the under stimulated horde that showed up for the launch in Troy on August 5, perhaps most memorable is brother Bill. Bill waved goodbye with the rest of them and then kept popping up along the banks of the Hudson like an animated "Where's Waldo." He'd appear from tank farms, emerge from bushes, wave wildly from abandoned piers, flash his tights from bridges and dirt roads. I mean, 30 miles down the Hudson I was afraid to take a break for fear that he was watching and would report back on his slacker brother. Bill, how you (or your car) got to the places you did is beyond me, but it sure enlivened my first day; when a send-off lasts for four hours, you know you've been sent off by people who really care.

And Peter. Peter drove down from Vermont, wisely bypassing the send-off in Troy, parked his car in Saugerties (50 miles downstream), got on his bike, and spent the day biking perhaps twice my 50 mile day, searching, calling, searching, ever searching. His Chevy was a treasure trove of Gatorade, sandwiches, marginally edible if healthy oatmeal cookies, and useful "sundries" for a rookie rower; Peter rowed competitively at Dartmouth, our alma-mater, and knows what a fellow needs to ply the water. We shared a tent in Saugerties and a floor at the Marlboro Yacht Club, and his mobility delivered the only two morning cups of coffee I would

see for many days. Above all, I appreciated his sage early advice on pacing, the importance of taking a break now and then and, most importantly, his incandescent spirit and great humor. Peter, frankly, was instrumental in enabling me to establish a pace and pattern that would ensure the successful completion of the trip.

I've already written about Bill Flammer, my host in Stone Harbor, and his heroic dash to Cape May with the Wa-Wa Supreme Roast Beef Sandwich.

Then there's Andy and Sandy who, themselves hosted by Sandy's gracious sister and her husband, treated me like royalty in Beach Haven. Andy put the finishing touches on Sandy's bolognaise sauce... and my fears that such a repast would have me looking for the men's room on my boat the next day were unfounded. That sauce was the best I had ever had, it went through me like a bullet train, and I was totally refreshed the next morning. They had driven all the way from Princeton to make my trip more comfortable; the pleasure of their company was, as always, the best fuel of all.

Other heroes? Oh, there were many:

Everyone who gave me permission to sleep on their dock, their floor, or their beach.

The fisherman who gave me the skinny on the C&D Canal... which emboldened me to try this critical passage at night.

Folks who had the curiosity to ask what the hell I was up to instead of just wondering silently.

The girl in Mantatoking who gave me the key code to the men's room (and, I suppose indirectly, the guy I never met in Mantatoking who must have given her the key code).

The two gals on the park bench in Ocean City who not only urged me to tell my story, but who also, later, put in a good word for me with the cops as I rolled out my bag on the dock.

Cheryl & Cheryl in Chesapeake City. I'm going back there for my next haircut and a Gatorade, and maybe a gift. Simply unbelievable.

My mom, who gets the "Traveled Furthest Award" for greeting me at the Inner Harbor. We don't get to pick our moms, but somehow I think I might have.

The Boys' Latin School community: my students, their families, and my colleagues. I am blessed to work, if one can really call it "work", at such a place. This week one of my students from last year said, "Man, Mr Frei, you took ripped. Can I see the pythons?"

And, finally, all of you who supported me with your continued interest and sponsorship donations. Frankly, the fact that this thing has taken on a life of its own beyond the act of rowing itself has been the best part of the experience. Your interest has been flattering and fun to pander to, your checks have largely cleared and are now doing the good work promised, and I'm going to miss this when it is finally over.

"Mr Frei, you raise an interesting point. When do you think this will be over?"

To paraphrase Gratiano in "The Merchant of Venice", "You have me on the hip." I have a few more stories I'd like to tell just to complete this travelogue, if only for my own posterity, but as we all know, at some point the Egg Foo Yung has to go. And, as they say on Broadway, "Leave them wanting more." Or, as Kenny Rogers sang, "Know when to fold 'em."

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**September 14, Upper Pasquotank River:** We left Edenton yesterday heading for the Chesapeake on our annual fall trip. Our trip down the Albemarle reminded me of a note I received on a paper I wrote for a freshman English class in 1957.

"A remarkably good paper, free from your usual signs of incompetence. I wonder by what means, fair or foul that you accomplished this."

I don't know how we accomplished it but we did not run aground, hit a stump, pound into a head sea, get stopped by the Coast Guard (or Marine Police, or Wildlife Officers), snag a crab pot, get caught in a net, negotiate a maze of crab pots (a 12' canoe could not get through), get caught by a tornado (or hurricane or thunderstorm, or snow storm or hail storm) or, in short, all the things that in the past made our trips memorable. This despite the fact, for the first time, leaving for a trip on a Friday, something sailors should never do, especially on a Friday with such an inauspicious date.

(Professor T, quoted above, was a thoroughgoing realist who had a hard time with someone who liked to write about talking animals and the like. I restored his faith in me when he was able to deduct 30 well deserved points on my final exam for spelling mistakes).

The only eventful thing that happened on the Albemarle (notice I have not said anything about the Pasquotank yet) was a near collision with an airplane. Kay regrettably missed the entertainment as she was below. This homemade plane with a pusher prop came at us about 2' above the water. At the last moment it pulled up to 56'1", and thus cleared our mast. At that point Kay came up, looked, at the plane and said "Why is he flying so low?" If she only knew!

The other notable observance was that there were more crab boats on the Albemarle than crab pots. They were running all over the place. Kay said that we saw more boats on this trip than we did in all of other trips combined, and all of them crabbers, doing what I do not know. Maybe it is a Friday thing?

Well, we reached the Pasquotank at about 3pm and made the turn and thereby discovered where all the crab pots we had seen on the Albemarle on our spring trip now are domiciled. Every last one of them was on the Pasquotank. A child could have walked to shore by stepping from float to float. The exception to this was those floats that one crabber was using. They were small cork floats that barely, if at all, broke the plane of the water. This (I assume) guy belongs in the Crabbers Hall of Fame, a truly stunning accomplishment given the competition.

We reached the Elizabeth City Bridge at 5pm and discovered that it was on restriction and would not open until 5:30pm. Not a big surprise, given the time of day and on a weekday. We are now at anchor about a mile past the bridge at a place I think is called "The Cedars". We will leave at around 11am for South Mills on the upper Pasquotank in order to make the 3pm opening of the lock and thus gain entrance to the Dismal Swamp Canal. Normally the lock opens four times a day, but because of the drought and, consequently, low water in Lake Drummond it now only opens at 9am and 3pm.

**September 15, NC Visitor Center, Dismal Swamp Canal:** We left yesterday, raising the anchor at 11:30am, which was a good

## Waterlogged

### Being a Chronicle of Ten Years of Misadventures Cruising Chesapeake Bay and Pamlico Sound

#### Part 7

#### Lower Upper Pasquotank 2002

By Carl Adler

hour earlier than we needed to be there. The upper Pasquotank is one of the wildest and prettiest places we have ever been. We certainly were able to appreciate the scenery, as we slowed down to 2 knots as we approached the lock in order not to reach it before it opened at 3pm. Eventually we were overtaken by *Lolligo*, a Morgan 45, which had come from the Alligator River. In explaining to them on the radio why we were going so slow (a necessity since there was no room to pass), we also alerted the lock operator to our predicament and she told us to come ahead. She would open the lock and let us tie up there and wait for the locking at 3pm. A very welcome gesture and one we immediately took advantage of. At South Mills the lock raises us about 12', which is an interesting experience. At least we feel we have accomplished something. If we take the other route to the Chesapeake, The Virginia Cut, the lock at Great Bridge moves us only a foot or two, up or down, leaving us with the feeling of "Much Ado About Nothing".

After exiting the lock we had to wait for the lock operator to (drive down) and open the bridge at South Mills. After clearing the bridge we were on the Dismal Swamp Canal, and shortly thereafter we were tied up at the Visitor Center.

**September 16, Waterside Marina, Norfolk VA:** We left the visitor center at 11:50am and sped towards the lock at Deep Creek and, as usual, arrived there too early so, as before, we slowed down. In fact, we slowed down so much that two canoes passed us! One of them being paddled by young kids. Kind of embarrassing. Of course, as soon as we were at the bridge, which precedes the lock, a strong wind arose blowing us towards the bridge. It always happens. We did clear the bridge at 3pm headed for the lock, and as soon as we did, the torrential rain started. Not what we hoped for but all went well.

The trip through the Dismal Swamp canal to reach the lock was not uneventful. The water level was low and consequently we bumped over a dozen times several of them seriously. The canal is only 50' wide and the trees lining both sides tend to grow out over the canal. They are regularly trimmed back by the Core of Engineers but this had not been done for about eight months. As a result we not only have to dodge floating debris, such as a floating pig, but had to dodge the overhanging trees with our mast. Sort of a three-dimensional maze. The whole thing is made more complicated when we meet another boat. Generally other sailboats understand the problem and make the adjustment accordingly, but power boats rarely recognize the problem with the mast and do not understand why we cannot maneuver as they would like us to.

We exited the canal into the very misnamed and poorly marked Deep Creek. We planned this to coincide with a rising tide, so that when, as usual, we ran aground, we could float off. We didn't, but close, we draw 4'6" and saw a depth of 4'7". Yow.

Leaving Deep Creek to reach Waterside we had to pass through five bridges, three of them railroad bridges which are normally open. We were traveling on Sunday so that the bridges were not on restriction and would open on demand. Sure and I believe in Santa Claus too (well actually I do sort of). All went well until we were near the Jordan Highway Bridge when the torrential rain recommenced. We could not even see the bridge, let alone the center span. I called them and requested an opening, hoping that when the center span started to lift I could detect the motion. On the other side of the Jordan Bridge is the Beltline Railroad Bridge. The Jordan Bridge operator responded that he could not honor my request because the Beltline Bridge was down with a train on it. Eventually the train cleared and we made it to Waterside where we now sit (in a torrential rain).

**September 18, Salt Ponds Marina, Hampton VA:** When I started writing I told Kay that there was not much exciting to write about. She replied "Thank God". Sure enough there have been complaints. "It is more fun when you run aground." "Try falling off the boat again." And the like. Well we did have some excitement this time, but more about that later.

In the way of "every storm has a silver lining", when we were coming into Norfolk in the driving rain, Kay's rain jacket dissolved. Mine survived because, unlike Kay, who was at the helm, I was under the dodger trying to keep a chart book dry as I navigated. Yesterday Kay tried on our only remaining wet suit, one she had not worn for 7 years (on a trip to Bennets Creek with the Edenton Yacht Club), and found my long lost and much prized pipe in her pocket. How it got there, neither of us know, as I never wore that wet suit because it is too small for me, and to my almost certain knowledge Kay does not smoke my pipes.

The trip from Waterside to Salt Ponds was (almost) remarkably easy. No waves, no wind and, of course, no sailing. In fact we have had no traveling wind since we left. We have traveled for 22 hours to get here and have used only 11 gallons of diesel fuel. Remarkable.

Coming out through Hampton Roads we were paralleling for almost an hour (at a distance of about 75 yards on our port) a tug pushing several huge barges. Some time later I heard a tug on channel 16 calling to some idiot in a sailboat to get out of his way before he ran him down. I turned to make a comment to Kay and saw... (to paraphrase Pogo, as I remember), "We have seen the idiot and the idiot is us." A (very) quick right circle brought us behind him and then onto the other side. I do not know why he changed course or did not use his horn when he did, but in this encounter he was the 800 pound gorilla.

We are at Salt Ponds Marina now and enjoy it greatly. Besides great slips and a great restaurant it has added a diesel repair facility and of all things a Massage Studio.

Overheard on Channel 16: "Tidewater Yachts, Tidewater Yachts, this is the sailing vessel *Lucent Dreams* calling", and I thought I had a lot of nerve in wanting to call our boat *Calipygeous*.

More names: On a power boat, *Makaveli*. I guess I will stay away from them. And on



another powerboat presumably owned by Mr and Mrs Yoot, *Two Yoots on the "C"*. I hope they never have to call the Coast Guard.

While we were at Waterside a very large (faux?) paddle wheeler was docked at Town Park for awhile. The boat's name was *Annabelle Lee*, which puzzled me until I remembered the poem from Poe I learned in high school, which as I remembered has a line that goes something like: "Annabelle Lee, Annabelle Lee, in a kingdom by the Sea". Pretty clever.

#### September 24, Salt Ponds, Hampton

**VA:** We had to return home for several days to take care of a medical matter as well as some business. But we are back now in time for our first misadventure (I can hear the cheers). Yesterday at 5pm I had a drink of water and started to take a shower. After wetting down, turning off the water, and soaping, I turned on the water and... NOTHING. Surely Kay was playing a joke. I called to her to turn the water pressure back on and... nothing. It turns out that the water pump had picked that particular moment to fail. Who says boats don't have a sense of humor? To get to the water pump I have to disassemble the entire front part of the boat. Even at that it is still a job, because I can't see two of the screws that hold it in place (and even more difficult to install the new one; I did mention before that I carry a spare for everything). Well the shower was completed at 9:30pm and dinner at 10pm. We really enjoy boating.

September 30, Sarah Creek, York River: We have done things differently this year, because Kay is on crutches we have to be very careful of the weather. Since there was a northeast wind blowing, seemingly endlessly, since we arrived here and that wind generates a nasty chop coming from the direction in which we wished to point *Spindrift*, in port we stayed. Today was a different story... light easterlies, and off we went.

Of course, that made for an uneventful trip, at least, until it became time to anchor. We picked Sarah Creek because we knew the sister of a friend of ours and her husband live on a boat there (and also we have never been on the York before). We hope to contact them tomorrow.

"*Spindrift* give the anchor time to grab. *Spindrift* back down on it now." All heard on the VHF while we set and reset and reset... the anchor. Sometimes things just don't work out. For some reason, all the boats in the overcrowded anchorage were lying bow to the wind while *Spindrift* obstinately wanted to lie stern to the wind, which meant that the anchor rope was fouling the keel. Arrgh!

Eventually, as is always the case, things resolved themselves and we settled down to pre-dinner cocktails. The next special event occurred while attempting to cook the spare ribs for dinner on the rail mounted (over the water) propane grill. Just as a boat load of people went by waving at us, and just as I was turning the knob on the propane flow control, which is attached at one end to the portable propane bottle, and at the other end to the aerator, which in turn is connected to the feeder tube from which the grill cover was hanging, and which, up until that exact moment, was connected to the bottom of the grill. It fell. I lunged over the rail. I caught it. At that moment Kay realized she was in danger of losing: propane cylinder, control valve, aerator, cover, feeder tube and husband to Sarah Creek. She rescued them in order of importance.

All of which reminds me of a cat named, or more precisely, I assume, re-

named, "Splash". While at Salt Ponds we were next to a pirate ship looking downeaster named, logically enough, *Sea Pirate*, belonging to the liveaboards, Les and Bonnie. They showed their individualism by defying the practice of the Snow Birds, who in droves go south in the winter and north in the summer. They were returning north for the winter to their home port of Urbana on the Rappahannock River from Marathon, Florida. We learned from them the high cost of marina living in that area of Florida (near the Keys.) They said that they easily could have paid \$1,500 a month in a not so nice marina for a slip. They paid \$600 a month for a slip without water and electricity. Wow! Don't think we will be going there.

Bonnie and Les had two animals aboard, one being a Chinese crested dog which sort of looked like a cross between a chihuahua and a miniature poodle. They also had the aforementioned cat named Splash. Splash had the habit of falling into the water, which I am sure surprises no one given the name. One morning they arose to a muted meowing which produced for them a fruitless search of the boat for the cat. Splash was finally located clinging to the outboard rudder. Splash had other entertaining qualities, once he climbed two thirds of the way up the roller furling. One can only imagine what would have happened if they had not noticed him and unfurled the jib? They never did say how they got him down, in my experience cats like to go up but rarely want to come down. We had a Maine coon cat named Remington Steele. Remington would climb high up in a tree and then freeze, meowing for help. When our son Chris would climb up to rescue him, Remington would jump.

Not related to this trip, but there is a good story about the cat named Remington. Remington was a poor example of a Maine coon cat (we know because we also had one that was a good example.) He defined the term "Scaredy Cat". He was afraid of everything. Which is why we were surprised when neighbors started complaining about him "beating up" on their cats. One day I found him dead beside the road. It certainly was him since besides the matching markings he had a Bot Fly scar on his right hip. We called the kids who came home from their friends and we then buried Remington.

About six hours later I heard a noise at the back door and there was Remington hanging from the screen! Yes we had seen the movie *Pet Semetary* at the time and it was with some trepidation that we opened the grave and thankfully found the other Remington.

October 2, Sarah Creek, York River: We set out yesterday in our dinghy to visit with the sister (and her husband) of a long time friend and fellow sailor. Their boat, a Colvin 41 steel ketch, was "on the hard" at nearby (or so we thought) Jordan Marine. The problem was that we use an electric motor on our dinghy and we had no idea of its range using a lawn tractor size gel cell battery. We had only used it once before and then only to circle our boat a few times. I used my plotting GPS, and an educated, but erroneous, guess at Jordan Marine's location on Sarah Creek, and estimated that we had only a half-mile to go. It turned out that it was more like a mile.

We arrived in just a few minutes and had a nice visit, however, all four of us were concerned that the dinghy's battery would not make it back to our boat. The situation was complicated because we would be going

against an incoming tide, but thankfully there was no adverse wind, in fact, no wind at all. After the visit Kay and I and 48lbs of ice set off for *Spindrift*. At first all went well. But as we traveled we steadily lost speed, which was not bad since we enjoyed the scenery. About halfway back the wind came up on our bow and built steadily, and it stopped, not the motor but the boat, at best the motor could hold us in place. Soft bottom inflatable dinghies do not row well and you might remember that on our earlier Pamlico trip we had lost our rowing seat, and, to make matters worse, we were now facing an adverse current and wind. We solved the problem by having Kay sit facing backwards on the port tube and row the port oar in the usual fashion (pulling) while I sat on the starboard tube facing forward and rowed by pushing the oar blade backwards. It worked well and eventually Kay and I and 30lbs of ice reached the boat.

We use an electric motor for several reasons:

It is cheap (\$100 vs \$600 for a small gas motor.

We do not have to carry gas which defeats the main purpose of having a diesel with its less volatile fuel.

It is quiet.

It weighs almost nothing, which takes all the "fun" out of trying to pass the motor from the boat to the dinghy.

It starts every time (as long as we do not press it too far as we just learned).

I should have anticipated the wind. It was late in the afternoon and we were traveling roughly west to east. In times of good weather, I long ago noticed that, the stern of the boat always faces the sun in the morning and then again in the evening. This is very noticeable to me because those are the times I write this journal and the sun is always in my face (or on the computer screen if I sit facing forward). Very annoying. I think this occurs for the same reason (differential heating) that there is an onshore wind at the ocean shore in the morning and an offshore wind in the evening. Thus an east to west wind should have been expected. Oh well, I suppose it is trite to say so but "live and learn".

**October 2, Kiptopeke State Park, Cape Charles, VA:** The harbor here was created by sinking nine surplus ferrocement Liberty ships in 1950. We first heard of this place several years ago at the Alligator River Marina. This was the terminus of the cross bay ferry which predated the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. All the books say that it is difficult to see the ships as they blend in with the shore. One has to proceed on faith. The books are not wrong on this. I made out the ships before Kay. In fact, for a long time, she could not make them out at all and the reason is interesting. The ships are placed end to end and since the ends are not vertical there is a triangular shaped gap at the bottom which she was seeing as a series of white buoys in front of a solid brown surface. When she realized that they were ships and pointed this out to me I could also see what she had been seeing. It was sort of like an Escher painting.

The trip across the Bay was uneventful. The water was calm and what little wind there was gently encouraged us along from behind. We covered 27.4 nautical miles in 4 hours. Pretty good. The ease of the crossing caused me to be a little careless with navigation. I pretty much took our heading to be that given by the GPS. Forgetting about the outgoing tide. In crossing the Bay we cross a major

ship channel and when we got to it there was a major ship coming. I went below and turned on the radar so that I could track his movement and shortly realized that there would be no problem. At the same time I noticed that I could see the Liberty ship breakwater 8 miles ahead and that it was about 10 degrees off to the left even though our heading was 95 degrees and the GPS said that our target was at 95 degrees. Of course the problem was that we were pointed at 95 degrees but owing to the tidal flow we were actually moving at 105 degrees. A classic physics problem, I should know better. Once I corrected for this there were no further problems.

All of which reminds me of the time in 1976 when two others and I sailed a Westerly 26 to Bermuda. Going over we very carefully took into account the current in the Gulf Stream in our navigation and hit Bermuda dead on. Coming back we figured that we couldn't miss North America and were less careful. We were right we didn't miss North America but we did miss North Carolina. That was my first trip to Virginia by boat.

Neat Names: On a sailboat, *Watermark*. Kind of Clever. And on a powerboat, *Jealousies*. On a Catalina 30 sailboat, *Gone with the Wind*. I find it hard to believe that this is the first time I have seen this all too obvious name.

October 3, Kiptopeke State Park, Cape Charles, VA: My birthday. In exactly one year I will qualify for the Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band question. Regrettably two of the Beatles will never get to answer it.

Kiptopeke is really very nice. Protected by those Liberty ships, sand beaches, elevated wooden nature trails, swimming areas and a Tiki Bar. Too bad we did not get to try any of it. We tried to go in by dinghy, and, of course, our battery for the dinghy motor was dead. But I have another one, that I use for the computer, which I thought would do the trick. I miscalculated. I thought I had only been using it for the four days since we left Salt Ponds but sad to say I had been using it, off and on, for three weeks. I make a lot of mistakes. And yet another. I assumed that since it was nearly high tide the tidal current would be minimal. Boy, was I wrong. After we cast off I quickly realized that there was a very strong current indeed, the motor had zero chance of besting it, and shortly thereafter as hard as we rowed we could not overcome it. This is all in the mode of "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread".

But our angel was looking out for us, even if we were not. Earlier in the day a chartered sailboat, *General Gamble*, crewed by three gentlemen and two ladies from England arrived and anchored. We remarked that given the huge harbor it was strange that they chose to anchor 150' behind us. Thank God. The current, with encouragement from us, carried us right to them. They snagged our line, thankfully, since we would have been swept through the nearby Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and I would have returned to Bermuda, this time in a much smaller boat.

The people on the *General Gamble* remarked that they had come over for a swim (the water is cold but remember they are from Britain), but seeing our struggle against the current they thought they would pass on that. Even the 4hp motor on their dinghy had trouble towing us back to *Spindrift*. In trying to get out of our dinghy and onto the boat I made my best attempt yet to fall in but did

not succeed. Being lunch time I had vegetables, well actually three olives in a marinade of sort.

#### October 5, Salt Ponds, Hampton VA:

We really liked Kiptopeke (save the current) and it is especially nice that it is less than three hours from Salt Ponds. Coming back was almost uneventful. The weather was somewhere between heavy haze and light fog. Visibility was about two miles as we learned when we reached the main shipping channel and out of nowhere a huge ship materialized nearby. The radar showed it to be two miles away, about ten times further than it appeared, and on we went with no further misadventures.

Docking at Salt Ponds can be a challenge because there is only one piling (at the stern) and there is nothing to stop us from being blown into the boat next to us given the wind from the wrong direction, which is what we faced. This does not have to be a problem since dockhands are available, but since we are considering relocating here we felt we had to give it a try on our own. The only solution is for me to jump to the floating pier with a line on the midship cleat, assuming that Kay brings me close enough and the boat slow enough at the same time. At 14 a jump of 2½' feet would have been fun, at 41 a risk, now a challenge. I made it though I received a two for style points.

#### October 6, Salt Ponds, Hampton VA:

One of the more entertaining things that one can do while in a slip is to listen to the computerized voices on the NOAA weather radio. Our favorite was about ten days ago when we listened to the current coordinates of tropical storm "Is Otter". Kay and I looked at each other with puzzled looks for several seconds before we both laughed when recognition occurred to both of us (I will leave it to you to figure this out). About ten years ago I fooled around with computer voices and even then one could teach the computer how to pronounce words that were troublesome, I can't imagine why NOAA does not do so. Also why does it say "Waves 1 foot building to 2 feet", but "2 feet subsiding to 1 foot"?

We now know what is the true meaning of the term "Breakdown Cruise". About everything that could break down did so. I already mentioned the water pump (BTW we have a backup now), but also the head (plugged vent), the grill (the bottom disintegrated), rope hangers (dissolved) and most recently our batteries. We use three #31 AGM batteries and replacing them is just a little less expensive than sending a child through college. Also they are difficult to find. Off we went to West Marine on the (famous) Mercury Boulevard in Hampton. They had one ("It is a high dollar item we only stock one, but we think the Norfolk store has two"). On to 64 and through the dreaded Hampton Tunnel to Military Highway and then Virginia Beach Boulevard. They had one but could tell us the West Marine store in Virginia Beach also had one. (Making three).

"How do I get there?"

"Are you familiar with the area?"

"No"

"Well take Virginia Beach Boulevard to Great Neck Road and turn left. A hell of a distance" (and it was). Three and a half hours later and almost \$1,000 dollars less we had our three #31 AGM batteries. To further complicate things, the batteries are too heavy for me to lift and I had to hire someone to remove the old ones and put in place the new ones. This

was somewhat embarrassing when the pretty girl at the Virginia store picked one off the shelf and carried it to the checkout counter. At least at the other stores they used a cart.)

#### October 7, Salt Ponds, Hampton VA:

After several weeks in the water we expected that our dinghy bottom would be replete with a colony of barnacles. We pulled the dinghy to clean the bottom and there were barnacles, of course, but we would never know it because the entire bottom was covered with a revolting gelatinous carpet 3"-4" thick. It looked like thick clusters of aquatic eggs. We have been up here six or seven times and we have never seen this before. I am told that they are called sea grapes, and it is no wonder that we had motor/battery problems. I am surprised that we moved at all. Later we learned that whatever it was, it was not sea grapes. I think we have identified the incredible gunk as a Bryozoan (moss animal). That is enough biology for me.

#### October 23, Nansemond River, Hampton Roads, VA:

"It was a 'dark and stormy night'" (I always wanted to say that). Well it actually was three nights ago when we returned to *Spindrift* at Salt Ponds. Pretty much the same thing could be said about the next day and night. However yesterday was close to perfect so we set out for the Nansemond, which joins the James River and later the Elizabeth to form huge Norfolk Harbor.

Actually, before I discovered the Nansemond in our Chesapeake Guide yesterday morning I had never heard of it. It is a large river and given its location rather undeveloped. There seems to me almost no development along the northern shore and limited development on the southern shore. Despite being the river that serves Suffolk it has very little traffic and is a nice place to visit. The most notable feature are two homes mounted on stilts right on the river. They were apparently used to guard private oyster beds but are now used as vacation homes.

In getting here we finally crossed the Monitor and Merrimac Tunnel, which is the tunnel we now use to travel from Greenville to Salt Ponds, and is the last of the four area tunnels for us to have crossed. It is also the most recent to open, opening in 1992 after our first trip to the Chesapeake in 1991. Our actual plan for this trip was to go up the (nearby) James River. So what stopped it? A parenthetical comment that is what stopped us.

When we don't use the Monitor and Merrimac we use the James River Bridge. It is a busy bridge connecting Newport News with (eventually) Suffolk. The bridge is listed on the chart as having 60' clearance which is rather low to start with, 65' being the norm. But still with a mast height of 56' we should have no problem, right? Well our Chesapeake guide says parenthetically that "local knowledge says that is as much as 10' feet lower" than the stated 60'. Now even that should not be a problem since, other than at rush hour, it opens on demand. What worries me is the potential conversation with the bridge operator.

*Spindrift*: "James River bridge this is the sailing vessel *Spindrift* approaching you from the south requesting an opening."

Bridge: "What is your mast height captain?"

*Spindrift*: "56'."

Bridge: "You do not need an opening, we clear 60'."

*Spindrift*: (long pause) "Ah... I heard that it was maybe some what less than that."

Bridge: "Who are you going to believe? Come ahead."



*Spindrift*: "OK."

(Sometime Later)

Bridge: "OOPS, sorry I guess it isn't 60' after all."

I think that I will wait until I talk to someone who has a 57' mast and has passed under the bridge.

**October 24, Mill Creek, Hampton Flats, Hampton Roads VA:** Sandwiched between the northern terminus of the infamous Hampton Bridge Tunnel and the city of Hampton there is a great anchorage. On the Hampton side there is the Chamberlin Hotel, a dominating feature and famous for its Sunday brunches. Regrettably it is not Sunday. The trip here from the Nanesmond was uneventful and we anchored at 3pm on the mark. The only suspense was that on the chart the entrance channel is listed as 11.5' wide about the same width as our boat and we have trouble with 90' channels. We had no problems and I do not believe the 11.5' (on the other hand we have not gotten out yet without misadventure).

The *Guide* says there is room for 50 boats here and I believe it, all of which makes me wonder why the *Alcid* decided to anchor on top of us. They also did not bother to set their anchor, just threw it overboard. Kay thought I should say something to them, like "You are too \*\*\* close", but fearing "Roads Rage" I remained silent. Reminds me of an occasion at Cape Lookout when a chartered sailboat anchored on top of us and did not set the anchor. On that occasion I said something to the Captain and she replied that she knew how to anchor. At that point Captain and crew got into the dinghy and off to shore they went. No sooner did they arrive at their destination then their anchor broke loose. Kay and I caught the boat and held it until the Captain swam back, raised the (now) useless anchor and motored away without a word. Nor did I speak, but had a hard time keeping a smile off my face.

Something else I wonder about is why *Alcid* had two full head sails both running from the top of the mast to roller furling drums on the foredeck where they are separated by a mere 1½'. Tacking the foremost would be a real challenge. There are 13 sailboats here this morning 12 of them undoubtedly "Snowbirds" heading south. When we arrived yesterday there was no wind, today it is blowing 15 to 20 from the northeast. I wish we were heading south as the Bay is going to be very rough.

Anchored nearby are two boats with interesting names. One equipped for Ocean sailing is named *Albatross*, that takes a lot of nerve. The other is named *Compass Rose*, a pretty clever name and one I had not seen before.

**October 25, Salt Ponds, Hampton VA:** The good news is that when we left the harbor into the Bay it was not blowing 15-20, the bad news was it was blowing 20-27. The stress of making little progress going against a steep head sea (4'-5') was intensified by an incoming Naval ship broadcasting warnings to stay away from it or risk (among other things) "the use of deadly force". We stayed away. It only took us an hour to reach Salt Ponds but it felt like many more.

We were one of only four boats (as distinct from ships) on the lower visible Bay, and all were having trouble. When out of the harbor entrance we had to turn parallel to the advancing wave fronts and we rolled and rolled as we progressed. Not dangerous

but very uncomfortable. Going into the narrow entrance to Salt Ponds with a strong following sea was something else again. *Spindrift* has a wide stern and waves and current kept trying to turn us broadside or worse. Being the navigator with nothing to do at the moment I did the only intelligent thing as we approached the rock jetty... and closed my eyes. I opened them when I heard Kay at the helm exhale (did peek once or twice). Once in we passed the *Sperry Star II* heading out.

We are in slip D11 which is the last slip on D Dock. The 63' *Sperry Star* is berthed on the T at the end of the dock and thus our neighbor. *Sperry* is a high end electronics company making radar and the like for the navy, container ships and large tugs. The boat is the test boat for their products, which is why they went out yesterday. They have a radar that can track a target at 100 miles interfaced with an infrared camera that does the same. I know all this because the Captain came over and introduced himself (he was the one that told us that the waves were 4' to 5'). Of course I had to ask him the inevitable question "Do you make the shoes". The answer was they sold off that part of the business 15 years ago! Nice guy.

I usually end these reports chronicling our trip back from the Bay to our home port in Edenton. Not this year, we are going to keep our boat here. Of the many reasons for this the most prominent is that the floating docks and wide stable finger piers are very kind to Kay's poor knees. Also we use almost a week of time getting to and returning from here and we could use the week to further explore the Bay. One problem with being here is a high boat tax, \$1 per \$100 of valuation. Because Norfolk, Portsmouth and Virginia Beach have no boat tax and thus have full marinas, Hampton with a 40% marina vacancy rate is planning, according to yesterday's *Hampton Daily Press*, to change this to 1/1,000,000 of 1 cent per \$100, effective January 1. I calculate that I will owe .05 cents. A real advantage over the \$280 we are currently paying in North Carolina.

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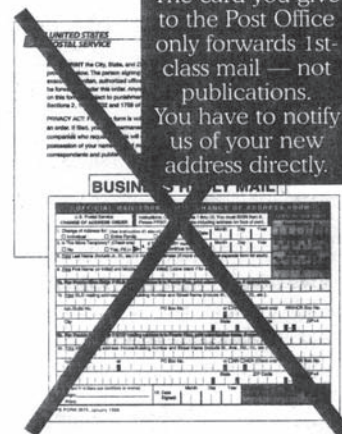
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## The International Scene

The apparent prosperity of half a year back has largely evaporated. Shipping rates are now at rock bottom and even the biggest container ships are among the several hundred such ships being laid up. Traditional lay-up sites such as the River Fal in Cornwall approached their maximum capacities for storing unemployed car carriers, bulkers, and reefers, and many ships of all types have been quietly parked "at anchor and waiting for orders" at various other ports worldwide.

The price of oil dipped below the \$50 per barrel level, a point at which oil companies start cancelling or slowing work on deepwater projects although one major independent said it could continue with oil as low as \$30 a barrel. But don't expect cheap oil to continue; a highly respected oil economist said we escaped \$200 a barrel only because of the credit crunch and he predicted that oil will rise to \$200 a barrel in near-term coming years.

Three damaged submarine cables between Sicily and Egypt disrupted telecommunications in the Middle East and nearby areas. There was a total loss of connectivity to the Maldiva Islands in the Indian Ocean while India, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Singapore, Djibouti, etc were badly affected.

### Hard Knocks and Thin Places

Sinkings and near-sinkings: Off the Cyprus coast, a cargo ship capsized and sank. Seven crewmembers were saved but three went missing.

Also in the Mediterranean, the smallish cargo ship *Farouk M*, en route to Lattakia from Alexandria, sent out distress signals, then sank. Seven crew of ten were saved and taken to Cyprus.

Off Bintan Island in Indonesia, the *Mego Permai* sank and fourteen out of fifteen crew were rescued by the Singaporean tanker, *Summer Spirit*.

A Hong Kong rescue chopper plucked ten crewmen off the sinking cargo ship *Shun Fat 328* (!).

In the Philippines, the engine of the *Ma Lourdes* malfunctioned and the cargo vessel sank, taking with it one crewmember.

In the Strait of Magellan, the engine room of the British Antarctic patrol vessel *HMS Endurance* became flooded. Chilean small vessels and the cruise ship *Norwegian Sun* stood by as the patrol vessel was towed to Punta Arenas.

Collisions and allisions: The UK-flagged ro-ro/passenger ship *Ropax I* (a logical name, eh?) collided with a refinery monobuoy at Gibraltar. The Algeciras harbourmaster said the ship's tanks weren't leaking in spite of a metre-long crack in the hull. The refinery said that the monobuoy wasn't leaking. But there was an oil spill from some source so the ship was arrested and later fined 400,000 euros by the Spanish Development Ministry for contaminating Algeciras Bay.

In the Kiel Canal in thick fog, the cargo ships *RMS Saima* and *Nordic Dianna* met. The eastbound *Saima* hit the embankment on the canal's south bank, bounced off it, and crossed the canal to the north bank. It then got turned around, forcing the *Diana* to hit the north bank.

At Boston, Massachusetts, the tanker, *Baltic Commander* lost power and crashed into Conley Terminal in spite of four attending tugs.

The bulkier *Sanko Phoenix* allided with a pier serving a fuel depot at Rensselaer, NY. No damage, injuries, or spill

## Beyond the Horizon

By Hugh Ware

Fire and explosions: While at anchor at Villagarcia de Arosa in Spain, the bulkier *Doxa* had a fire in the wheelhouse. Most of the crew of twenty-three took to life rafts but one man was missing. His body was later found in a hold.

In China at Dongying, an explosion demolished the tanker *HaiAo 9*, killing one and leaving two others missing. Water transportation is important in this country. Road transport of hazardous materials is not allowed on most highways so trucks detour via bumpy roads through small villages.

Groundings: While leaving Izmir, Turkey, the ro-ro *Fides* lost power and ran aground while passing the Yenikale shallow-water buoy. The ship subsequently got itself off.

On the River Seine, the product tanker *Seaturbot* (21,353 gross tons) ran aground close to the town of Tancarville. Three tugs refloated the vessel later that day.

Near Odessa, the 10,000-ton grain-carrying *Norra* ran aground because of engine failure. Three tugs freed it.

As the *Coskunar I* entered the Canakkale Strait in Turkey, it ran aground but got itself off.

Also in Turkey, the *Amiral Akdeniz* grounded at Kos. It carried general cargo plus two yachts on deck.

Human involvement: An Indian stevedore lost both legs at Port Klang in Malaysia after a steel bar fell off a forklift truck onto them.

The US Coast Guard made some long medi-evac flights. One was out to the chemical tanker *Bum Chin* some 700 miles south of Adak Island, Alaska to take off three seamen badly injured by a rogue wave. Another flight took a man off the *Marie Rikmers* 650 miles off San Diego. He was transferred to the nearby aircraft carrier *USS Abraham Lincoln* for immediate treatment and then airlifted to Monterey.

Other: At Melbourne, the container ship *APL Sydney* dragged its anchor about a kilometer and ended up parked on top of a pipeline carrying ethane. ExxonMobil, a co-owner of the pipeline, was trying to figure what to do next.

At Sandheads in India, some fifty-two large ships stayed at anchor in spite of available berths because most of the port's ten tugs were inoperative and the port's lock gate couldn't be opened more than five times a day. Only one tug was fully operational, two were partly useful, two couldn't work outside the lock gate or at night, and five tugs were inoperative. Reportedly, a private company had been chided for daring to offer four tugs without a request for a tender from the port. Of some pertinence here is that the position of port general manager has been vacant for years.

### The Grey Fleets

Building or otherwise acquiring submarines was popular for a while among the world's nations but now it is aircraft carriers that are the must-have vessels. The US leads the way with a dozen or so immense carriers with another joining the fleet about every four years or so, plus numerous aircraft-car-

rying carrier-like amphibious and command ships. France and India each have one carrier and want another. Great Britain is on track to build two carriers larger than any carrier it ever had before. Russia has one carrier and wants to build four more, while China is being cagey about its carrier plans but is buying *Sukhoi* carrier-qualified planes from Russia. South Korea, Thailand, and Spain also have warships that carry a few aircraft. No word yet about Brazil's plans to replace and perhaps supplement its carrier but stay tuned. At one time, over twenty nations had various ships that could carry helicopters and/or aircraft.

South Korea will build six 2,300-ton frigates by 2015 to replace nine Ulsan-class frigates dating back to 1981. And the same country has ordered six material packages from Germany so it can build six more Class 214 submarines.

Indonesia announced that it launched two patrol boats and needs another 128.

The US Navy will convert three more warships for the anti-ballistic missile defense role. The trio joins eighteen others so-equipped ships and will be stationed on the East Coast in case Iran throws some missiles our way.

And the Navy relieved the commander of the ballistic-missile submarine *USS West Virginia* after it lost confidence in his ability to command

### The White Fleets

Did the cruise ship *Athena* fight off pirates in the Gulf of Aden? The argument continues, with the cruise company denying that water cannons were used (but admitting that crewmen were standing near them) and passengers saying they had photos and videos of the cannon in use against a fleet of what the company described as twenty-three "friendly tuna fishing boats."

The *Oriana* skipped a call at Piraeus and docked at Naples instead because of Greek civil unrest due to the fatal shooting of a 15-year-old boy by police.

The *Arcadia* hoped to set out with 1,860 guests for a 101-day cruise but electrical problems kept the vessel at Southampton for the first of those days. There was no announcement whether the ship would still visit all thirty-five plus ports in nineteen countries.

Star Cruise was proud to present the world's first stainless steel water slide on a cruise ship. The \$550,000, 100-metre-long gizmo will be installed on the *Superstar Virgo* during a drydock period.

A woman was reported as missing off the *Norwegian Pearl* near Cancun, Mexico. Video showed somebody falling overboard early in the evening and her husband awoke early the next morning and reported her gone.

A female college student died aboard the *MSC Opera* while it was docked at Ilhabela, Sao Paulo, Brazil. Drugs such as acid and ecstasy may have played a role; she reported to the ship's medical center stating she did "not feel well" and was ordered off the ship. She died in the disembarkation process.

An entertainer on the *Carnival Sensation* fell overboard. Six companions saw him fall and said it was plainly an accident.

She's not really a cruise ship but she is the oldest ocean-going passenger ship in the world. Built in 1914 as the US freighter *Medina*, the *Doulos* is used as a floating library. If German owner Good Books For All cannot dig up the money to make her conform to



new international regulations taking effect in 2010, she may be scrapped or become a float-in restaurant.

### They That Go Back and Forth

At Samothraki, strong winds bothered the Greek ferry *Corsica Express Three* enough so that it struck a pier and five fishing vessels. The ferry suffered a small dent in its forepart.

Off Cornwall, an injured man with head and back injuries was heli-lifted off the *Bretagne*.

In the Philippines, the ferry *Oceanjet 3* went aground off Tagbilaran City. Apparently, none of the sixty-three passengers and fourteen crew was injured.

Less lucky was the wooden-hulled ferry *Maejan* (or *Meagan*, take your choice), which capsized in the Philippines near the mouth of the Cagayan River on an eight-hour voyage to Apam after its bamboo outrigger broke off under the pressure of high waves. Lost were twenty-seven people with another twenty-nine missing. (A few hours before that accident, three children had fallen overboard and only two were retrieved.)

Off Sulawesi Island in Indonesia, the 700-ton *Teratai Prima* rolled over and sank in bad weather. Nearly 250 died.

Fire in the engine room of the Canada Maritime's newest ferry, the *Atlantic Vision*, was fought and beaten by the North Sydney fire department.

The Norwegian Hurtigruten coastal steamer *Richard With* hit the bottom at Trondheim in strong winds and heavy snow. It was quickly moored at Pier 1 with a slight list and 153 passengers were evacuated over fire department ladders, a few at a time. The *With's* replacement will probably be the laid-up fleetmate *Nordyls*.

### Nature

The world's first large cargo ship partly powered by solar power sailed from Japan. The 60,213-tonne car-carrier *Auriga Leader* can carry 6,400 automobiles. Its 328 solar panels will generate 40 kilowatts of power for lighting and the crew's quarters. That is only 0.2 % percent of the ship's energy consumption for propulsion but the ratio may be improved.

A ferry using the US's first hybrid power sources went into service between San Francisco and Alcatraz Island. The *Hornblower Hybrid* has two ten-foot-tall wind turbines plus solar panels covering the awning on the top deck. Together, they power the vessel's lighting and electronics, and surplus power is fed to the main battery banks.

A battle between greenies and farmers and shippers over the amount of water flowing in the Lower Missouri River was won by the environmental forces when the federal Fish and Wildlife Service decided that, starting next June, no more than 25,000 cfm would be allowed to flow from the Gavins Dam on the South Dakota-Nebraska border. This will create shallows that will trigger spawning and maintain a survivable habitat for young of the endangered pallid sturgeon. Also protected will be the interior least tern ("endangered") and the piping plover ("threatened"). The resulting low water will probably mean an end to barge traffic serving the farmers of Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri.

A Canadian court fined the *Alida Gorton* \$80,000 for leaving an oily streak about 200 kilometers off Halifax. The amount of oil spilled was less than fifty litres. (Expensive oil, eh?).

### Legal Matters

The maritime world is getting increasing upset with flag states that illegally arrest and incarcerate officers of ships that got involved in some form of accidental incident. For one, India unions were among numerous international organizations that vehemently protested South Korea's arrest and subsequent sentencing of two Indian officers of the *VLCC Hebei Spirit*, which was rammed by an errant barge and then spilled oil profusely. A Korean appeals court ruled that the master could have avoided the drifting barge by going full astern and dragging the anchor; he increased the flow of oil by pumping inert gas into the tanks when the possibility of explosion was low; he should have ballasted the tanker to a 10° list that would have prevented any spill; and 3½ hours was too long for transferring oil between tanks.

And the European Court of Human Rights ruled that both the length of Capt Apostolos Mangouras' incarceration (83 days) and amount of bail (3 million euros) were not excessive. He was the master of the cracking tanker *Prestige* who was not allowed to make repairs in a Spanish port of refuge in 2002 but was sent far out to sea by the government. Some days later, the ship broke in half and its cargo of 70,000 tonnes of oil befouled Spanish, Portuguese, and French beaches, precisely as the on-scene salvor had predicted. The Court cited legislation put into effect after the accident and concluded that the Captain's time in jail was short compared with comparable cases.

Norway fined a Norwegian company \$725,000 for the 2007 sinking of the anchor-handling tug/supply boat *Bourbon Dolphin*, an overturning that killed eight including the fourteen-year-old son of the master.

A UK court fined a car-carrier company \$41,500 plus costs for a 100-litre oil spill by its *Autofreighter* at Southampton Water last year.

A US court sentenced the Korean master of the *Pan Voyager* to two months of home detention in the US (due to a medical condition) plus two years of supervised release for dumping oil-contaminated grain overboard. The ship's owner was previously fined \$750,000. Whistle-blowers tipped off US authorities.

### Illegal Imports

The Royal Australian Navy caught another boatload of illegal immigrants, the seventh in two months. All 165 people will be sent to Christmas Island for detention and eventual deportation. (The island is in the Indian Ocean 1,600 miles from the Australian mainland).

### Nasties and Territorial Imperatives

Some snapshots of what happened in the month's chaotic piracy scene: In the Horn of Africa general area, the US, China, India, Malaysia, Turkey, Russia and maybe Japan plus the European Union sent warships to escort food ships, to convoy commercial ships, and to deter acts of piracy.

The EU also said it would provide ships with free armed guards in some cases; this provoked an international argument about morality, various points of law, and what position each flag state should adopt.

The Shabab Islamic Militia was clamping down on pirates and now controls a large part of southern and central Somalia.

A French warship captured nineteen pirates as they tried to hijack a Croatian ship and a Panamanian ship; eight of the pirates were handed over to Puntland authorities.

The Indian Navy captured twenty-three Somali and Yemeni pirates after responding to a distress call from the cargo vessel *Globe*.

A ransom was parachuted from a small plane onto the deck of the *Sirius Star* but the VLCC tanker was not immediately released; five pirates exuberantly headed for shore but their boat was swamped and only one survived.

Two cruise ship companies said their ships could and would outrun any pirates while transiting the Gulf of Aden.

Germany said it wouldn't pay for any rescue attempts of captured cruise ships.

One large shipping company doubled the pay of crews travelling through the Gulf of Aden and then applied a surcharge of \$23 per teu for every container carried through the same area.

The Chinese ship *Zhen Hua 4* was assaulted by pirates but the crew locked themselves in the accommodation area and pluckily and successfully pelted the pirates from a plentiful supply of empty beer bottles. Also used: fire hoses, now known as "water cannons." According to one story, the pirates asked for shoes so they could depart without cutting their feet on the broken glass. Etc.

### Odd Bits

On appropriate naval occasions, Prince Philip still wears the naval uniform he wore when he married Queen Elizabeth II over sixty years ago.

Yachties set out alone on long voyages, get in trouble and then expect to be rescued. The latest was a French female sailor whose kite-propelled 18' sailboat broke down in the Doldrums some 1,700 miles southeast of Hawaii. The *Maersk Mytilini* took her off.

Yachties trying to set the fastest time in the single-handed Vendee Globe race around the world often need help. This year, a French competitor broke his thighbone in the usual nasty weather to be expected in the Southern Ocean several hundred miles from Australia. He lay on the floor of the *Generali*, helpless and in great pain for several days until the Australian frigate *HMAS Arunta* could reach him.

And an elderly (69) Dutch sailor needed rescuing from his Portimao Global ocean racer *Hayai* when its fancy swing keel was down to one bolt holding it on. The bulkier *CSK Radiane* diverted some 900km in the Southern Indian Ocean in order to reach him.

Yachties trying to set world speed records much nearer shore also need assistance from time to time. The sailing trimaran *l'Hydroptere* was traveling at over 60kts when it flipped. (The previous record was 50.57 knots averaged by a French kite surfer.) The nine crew on the trimaran received minor injuries.

### Head-Shakers

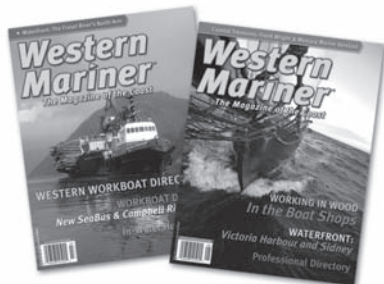
Two Frenchmen and a dog were cut off by the rising tide and became stranded on Cornwall's cliffs. They tried to remember a local phone number for help, and did. It was for the Port William pub at Tinagel.

Hot sand burns the feet of the mega-rich so guests at Dubai's exclusive Palazzo Hotel will enjoy a refrigerated beach.

In Scotland's Firth of Forth, a bird-lover found a lonely, starving gannet chick abandoned by its parents and unable to fly south to Spain in October. The Royal Navy has an air station in nearby Ayrshire called HMS Gannet and naturally it volunteered to take the little bird along on its next Sea King helicopter flight to Cornwall. There, it was hoped that a local fisherman would set the bird free for a southern flight although it didn't yet know how to fly or fish.

# Western Mariner

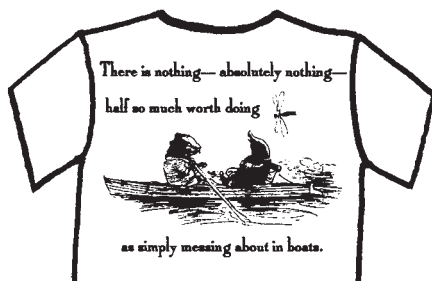
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## It's Twins!

By Eric Stockinger

Reprinted from the Atlantic Challenge  
Apprenticeship Newsletter

Here at the Apprenticeship, we are always on the lookout for that next "special" project. This fall we found one, well, two actually! Longtime shop supporter Frank Blair approached us with a project that had been stirring in his mind for some time, a project that had been talked about at the shop for years, but never quite got off the ground. "Wouldn't it be cool to have two boats, identical in every way, but capable of carrying different sailing rigs?" Students could sail the boats, head-to-head, rigged differently, to see how different rigs perform in different conditions. "Like a test pilot program for sailors," thought Frank, a former navy pilot himself.

Frank had recently finished a two year, global circumnavigation on his schooner, *Maggie B.* Frank refers to her as a "fusion" boat: wooden hull with carbon fiber spars, simple rigged gaff sails and the latest synthetic lines and fibers. Essentially, the best ideas of the old and the new. Why not use the same principles on these training boats: traditionally built wooden boats with carbon fiber spars and hybrid rigging. The lightweight spars would make it possible to change rigs quickly, right at the dock.

"Most sailors," according to Frank, "understand the general theory of centers of pressure, resistance and balance. Many are great at optimizing a specific boat or class. But few sailors have the experience of the full range of historic sail possibilities, let alone sailing them side-by-side with other variations. Next generation ideas can be easily experimented with (look how "gaff heads" are returning to America's Cup mainsails). These boats will give advanced sailors the chance to try out the past and imagine the future."

Frank asked the designer of *Maggie B.*, Nigel Irens of Scotland to think about the idea. Nigel is best known for designing *IDEC2*, Francis Joyon's 2007 record breaking trimaran, which beat Ellen MacArthur's record for fastest solo circumnavigation in 2005. Ironically, Nigel had also designed Ellen's boat. Fortunately for us, Nigel also has a passion for traditional wooden boats, having owned and sailed traditional fishing boats from the Shetland Islands. Not long ago, Nigel worked with the Gordonstoun School in Scotland, where the first Outward Bound school was founded, to develop an open boat for their seamanship program. The boat had traditional lines, but was built using lapstrake plywood with bulkheads and a ketch rig. Nigel suggested we might use this design for our boats, but build them with traditional plank-on-frame techniques.

Our boats will be 28' long, double-ended with lapstrake planking and a simple, open interior layout. The design concept is to create a simple system for the boats that allows for multiple mast placements and adjustable daggerboards. This enables either boat to be rigged as a sloop, a ketch, a schooner, or even a yawl. It could also allow for different sail types, such as gaff, Marconi, or perhaps even a dipping lug.

So, with little more than an idea, the Apprenticeship began preparations for construction in late August. The decision to build both boats at the same time came very early in the process. Lead instructor Kevin Carney thought it would be a good opportunity to compare building styles if one boat was constructed upside down and the other, right side up.

The first real challenge was getting a set of workable drawings. Most boats these days are designed using computers, and they don't usually include the tables and drawings needed for traditional lofting. Fortunately, Nigel was able to produce some of those tables, along with a large, scaled drawing that our students and staff could work from.

Working with Nigel, Kevin and Apprentices Josh Anderson, Eric Coker, Vanya Davydov, Jack Lippett, Jamie Llewellyn, Sarah McLean and Tyler Zogby were able to "fill in the gaps" and loft the boats with traditional components and scantlings. They had to be flexible, because at this point, no one knows where the daggerboard trunks will go, so the keel was drawn solid, with the understanding that slots would be cut in later.

With lofting completed by mid-September, Apprentices began building molds (the wooden forms used to define the shape of the hull), and the backbone. The backbone is composed of the keel, keelson, stem and the sternpost. Built from solid white oak and locust, the 6" wide, 28" long backbones weigh over 400lbs. each. By late October, the molds were finished, and the individual pieces of the backbone were bolted together using custom bronze bolts fabricated at the 'Shop. On the 27th, Nigel and Frank stopped in for a two-day visit to check on the progress and discuss design details with staff and students.

As we head into November, the final rig design of the boats is still unknown. Nigel is back in Scotland, working through the possible rig combinations and the Apprentices are getting set-up to lineoff and plank the boats. As is often the case here at the Apprenticeship, things seem to fall into place when needed. Nigel should have the final rig combinations done by the time planking is finished and the students can then cut in the daggerboard trunks before finishing out the boats which are scheduled for a late spring launch with sea trails to show off the "twins" this coming summer.

(For more information about the Atlantic Challenge Apprenticeship go to [www.atlanticchallenge.com](http://www.atlanticchallenge.com))

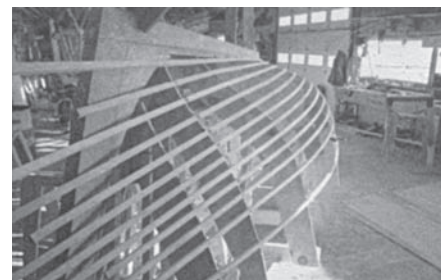


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By now the people of Cortez, Florida are pretty familiar with the story of the Cuban Refugee boat that the volunteers at the Florida Maritime Museum restored. They saw it when it was first brought up from Wyndley Key where it lay in weeds and bushes at the end of 16 years as lawn art.

Bob Pitt, the boatbuilder at the Museum, and Paul Thomas, the president of the Florida Gulf Coast Traditional Small Craft Association, were looking at it. Bob's cousin who owned the boat asked them if the Museum at Cortez would want it. They said, "sure, we want it," even with enthusiasm. Bob recognized that the boat has a history, it is part of Florida history. It was used by six Cubans to escape their Communist homeland and sail to America.

The 15' Cuban boat was found tangled in the grass flats on the Atlantic shore of Wyndley Key, Florida in 1990. Residents of a nearby trailer park said that six Cubans had reached dry land from her. For the next 16 years the boat rested on land as lawn art for a fishing cottage on Islamorada until the owner, Janice Rice-Carillo, decided to donate it to the Florida Maritime Museum at Cortez, FL.

Those years had taken such a toll on the boat that before trailering her back to Cortez from the Keys, Bob took several pictures of her. He and Paul worried about how much of her would survive the road trip, and they wanted to have at least an image of her original shape when they returned.

When Bob and Paul got the boat back to the museum, even the local Cortezans noticed it. Other museum volunteers wondered about the wisdom of trying to restore it. Some of us welcomed the chance to preserve this boat as an historic relic likely due to Bob's own enthusiasm for both Florida boats and Florida history. The museum's director, Roger Allen, went along with it when he was assured that little of the museum's small budget would be used.

When the volunteers finally got the opportunity to examine what was left of the boat and saw what deterioration the boat suffered open to all nature, they began to realize what a challenge they had to their skill and their will. Dry rot, termites, and carpenter ants had attacked a great deal of her, many of them even rode in her to the new location. The mast and sails were long gone. Residue of a shower curtain or some similar material that was used to help keep water out of the boat in heavy weather remained. The entire bottom, the adjacent planks, most of the frames, along with what remained of the keelson, the centerboard trunk and the centerboard itself had to be removed.

As the volunteers worked on the boat, taking what was left apart, examining and measuring what was left, the boat began to tell the volunteers its own story. They have used and added to their basic boat building skills. More than that they have gained a great deal of admiration for the skills of the Cubans who built her. Much of the wood appears to have been taken from other uses, perhaps other boats, perhaps docks or buildings. A couple of ways to tell this are by looking closely at the planks. Some of what looked like nail holes did not match frames and were filled with wooden pegs. Some planks were a bit short of reaching the next plank so a small piece was added, one in an L shape, and then another frame was put on the inside of the boat and the piece was patched to it as a kind of butt scarf.

Another act of ingenuity, prompted by need, is shown by the fasteners used. The

## Florida Maritime Museum's Restored Cuban Refugee Boat *Esperanza*

By Doug Calhoun  
Research Associate at the  
Florida Maritime Museum at Cortez



frames and planks were held together with several types of fasteners. Some of the different sized copper fasteners seem to have been cut and made from wires, maybe from house wiring, clenched in a vise and the top hammered to a head. Other copper fasteners looked as if they were cut from a sheet of copper. A few cut iron nails were used too that could have been made for the boat or adapted from a building or even furniture and maybe from a horse's hoof.

The experience gained in taking the boat apart, simply because there was not a great amount that could be saved, convinced us to use a similar process in restoring the boat. We used wood that had been leftover from other projects, wood that was left after a tree fell on Bob's chiki after a lightning storm, any suitable wood that we found. We used melaleuca trees from the F.I.S.H. property for the boom, an entire tree, and for the tiller just a branch. We used an old cypress fence to make the floorboards. The transom was made from stringers torn out of the Cortez Schoolhouse floor. We did buy some Cortez Teak, pressure treated pine, for the chines, keelson, centerboard, keel, and skeg. The inner stem was donated red cedar. We bought almost all the bronze fasteners used. The mainsail and jib were donated and adapted. Bob said that the museum's total investment may be as much as \$300. Let me just add here that no one in the neighborhood should attribute anything missing to our restoration project.

We finished the project in time to launch at our own Great Gulf Coast Small Craft Festival on April 19, 2008. That day she won the Lee Hickok Award for Traditional Design and Traditional Construction. After all this work, we began to feel pretty proud of this Cuban Refugee Boat and decided to take her to St Michael's, Maryland for the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum's 26th Annual Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival last October. We were entered in the Restoration Class, and by virtue of being entered in one class we were entered in "The People's Choice Class" with all 130 of the other boats. These boats ranged from kayaks and Whitehalls to a draketail launch, other launches, sharpies, etc, with beautifully finished paint and brightwork.

The boat was on display for both days of the Festival, and people seemed to be drawn

to her. There were so many people attracted to the boat that we were luckily joined in St Michael's by Jerry and Judy Biene from Erie, Pa, who are winter time volunteers at the boat shop. Jerry had worked on the *Esperanza* and talked about the boat to the many people coming by. The first response when someone looking at the boat was told that she was a restored Cuban refugee boat was, "really?"

We brought along some of the original fasteners, pieces of the original aft deck, inner stem and transom. We also had a ring binder with a description of the restoration process, photos of it, and previously published articles written about the boat. This was the idea of D. Turner Matthews a previous winner at St Michael's and occasional volunteer at the Museum.

We were all very proud when we received the Blue Ribbon for Restoration, but dumbstruck when we were given the plaque for "The People's Choice." Both will be proudly displayed at the Florida Maritime Museum at Cortez, come and see.

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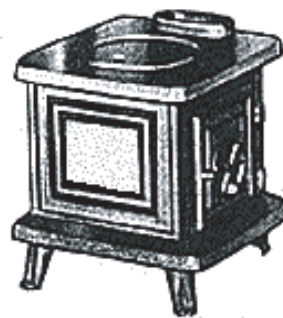
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It all started three years ago in Oswego, New York on the shores of Lake Ontario. I sat on the Board of Directors of the Oswego Maritime Foundation and discussed with my fellow members ideas for using our water resources to benefit our community and its families. On the board also was Mercedes Niess, now Director of the H. Lee White Marine Museum. As Associate Director of the Marine Museum at the time, she was looking to expand the museum's offerings and mentioned that many marine museums run boatbuilding activities.

Conveniently, the Maritime Foundation and the Marine Museum are next door neighbors, and so a joint activity was of interest to both parties. I had just finished perusing an article in *WoodenBoat* magazine about the Alexandria Seaport Foundation. They run a large family boatbuilding program, and I thought, hey, why can't we do the same on a smaller scale?

The idea began to germinate. Mercedes introduced me to one of her highly regarded volunteers, Carl Allen, and he offered up the plans for a dory. I roped in a colleague from my department at SUNY Oswego, Dan Tryon, for his interests in boats and talents as well. Together, we wrestled out the details and came forth with a plan for the H. Lee White Marine Museum and the Oswego Maritime Foundation to offer a family boatbuilding class. The construction of the boats was to take place on the Maritime's property under its pavilion. We could only fit about five families under the

## Building Boats Building Families

By Richard Bush

pavilion, so that was our lucky number. Mercedes set about to attract the families and find a sponsor while Dan and I began to work on the prototype. Raby's Ace Home Center, a family owned, local business, graciously donated materials, which helped to radically reduce the price for our families. They became our official sponsor.

We decided to create kits that contained everything needed to build the boats. We found college student volunteers to help with the cutting and assembling of the boat kits and enlisted the help of a mother (another volunteer from the Marine museum) and daughter to see if the "family" part of the boat building idea was feasible. It was.

That first year, the museum staff struggled to fill the spots available for the boatbuilding activity, but they did, and we kicked off our first session in September, 2006. It took two full weekends to complete the project. All five families met with success working together to create their boats and launched them into Lake Ontario on the last day.

We are now entering our fourth year of the program. Since that first year, we have expanded to two sessions, easily filling up the slots available with ten families, and have

streamlined the boatbuilding process into three days. Although we have cut the building time, we still put in around 40 man hours prior to the event to create the kits. Our volunteers are tireless in their efforts to make the program a success. We now offer three boatbuilding options: the original dory, a Bevins skiff and a canoe.

The families that participate come from all socio-economic backgrounds and range from the traditional nuclear family to any and all other kinds of modern family and multi-generational configurations. The experiences they come away with are what truly make the boatbuilding event a success.

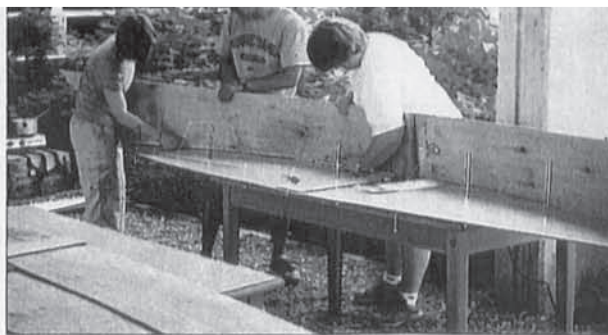
In the second year, about halfway through the process a mother commented that this was one of the most satisfying things she had ever done. At the end, her son went to put his boat in the lake; he was like a baby duck entering the water for the first time, a little shaky and uncertain. However, after about 15 minutes of paddling around she couldn't get him out of the water. He was hooked.

This past year, we had two husband and wife teams turn the event into a marriage encounter after it turned out that their children and grandchildren could not attend.

Our family boat building program is quickly getting noticed in our community and I truly believe that our activity helps build stronger families. Perhaps you and your family will consider joining us this summer or starting your own family boatbuilding program. For further information, contact the H. Lee White Museum at (315) 342-0480.







## Last Class

By Bob Dalley

This report and photos are from the last canoe building class I taught before retirement a few years ago. I particularly liked the young man in the foreground of the group picture pondering what lay ahead. Western Carolina University Offers Summer Canoe Construction Class

To celebrate the two hundredth anniversary of Lewis and Clark using in part the pirogue canoe to explore the Louisiana Purchase, Professor Bob Dalley of Western Carolina University's Engineering Technology Department thought it would be great to offer a interdisciplinary project instruction class in which each student built a pirogue canoe. The class filled with students from numerous disciplines using the course to meet elective credit requirements.

The double-paddle pirogue these students built is a far cry from what Lewis and Clark used. Features Professor Dailey incorporated into the canoe included a composite frameless aljome core hull with rocker hydrodynamics selected by each student for his own applications, a Kevlar graphite fiberglass bottom, and thermoplastic/thermoset bonded gunwales and chines. This advanced technology resulted in a light, quite durable, buoyant and fast watercraft. Originally designed in 1977 by Mike O'Brien, editor of *Boat Design Quarterly*, this canoe design is also used by Buffalo State College in its Watercraft Studies Program.

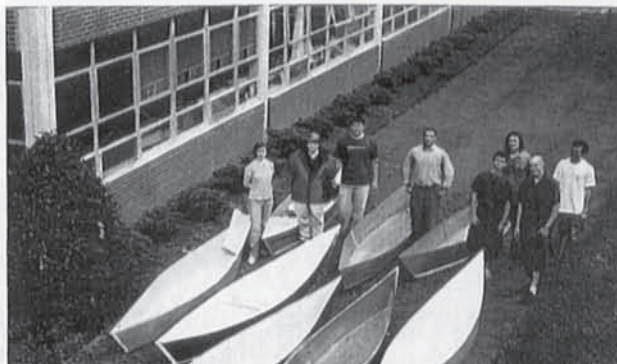
When students were asked what they learned in class, the most frequent comment could be illustrated by this teamwork quote; "I quickly found out it is very hard to build a canoe alone. Working with others not only helped speed up the progress, but also led to numerous ideas in material applications and design." Upon completion of the canoes, some of the destinations students were taking their boats to included Key West, the Snake River, and the North Carolina Coast.

Finally, when this class ended for students, it really had just begun. Participants will be answering inquiries about their canoe design, materials and how they built the watercraft for years to come. Students will also enjoy opportunities for lifetime recreation, fitness, environmental awareness and social interaction with the fast growing paddling community. Three students have career aspirations with regional boat manufactures.

### Captions Clockwise

Students examine their kits on the 1st day. A team goes to work assembling a canoe. Thermoplastic gunwales being attached. Composite material being applied to hull. African purple heart lumber installation. The beginning of the last class day.

Testing the fast, sensitive pirogue canoe.





In the late nineties, my sister-in-law, Dot, gave our family a membership in a yacht club where they were members. The yacht club is on a beautiful piece of property overlooking a pretty little cove with lots of fancy sailboats moored. They have a nice little beach to play on, a summer camp and sailing classes for the kids. For the adults they have a first rate tennis program, and, of course, very serious sailing.

I am a kayaker but I have always liked model boats. On Wednesday evenings during the summer, there is a dinner served, a great time for the kids to swim and play on the beach, and for the adults to tell sea stories. I did not really fall into either camp, so I started bringing some model boats along. I would bring my steam tugboat when it was calm, and my old mahogany sailboat when there was a breeze. I had a great time fooling around and drew a pretty good crowd from both camps.

The next year, some of the adult aged kids brought along some boats of their own. Kids will be kids, no matter how old, and so races started up. They were informal, but heated. I helped some folks get boats going that had been in the garage under the outdated skis. We had fun! After some time had passed, one of the members, by the name of Mr Kirby, brought along a model Laser. It turns out that Mr Bruce Kirby is a well-known yacht designer who designed the Laser. His model quite out-sailed my little old mahogany sailboat.

As much as I admire Mr Kirby and his Laser, I as a builder was NOT going to the store to buy a model sailboat. While I am a pretty good designer and a pretty good builder, I am not such a good a racing skipper, so I had to design a boat just a little faster and cooler than that Laser. And, as it was well into the season, I had to be able to build it fast.

I called the boat I designed *Independence* because I was an independent cuss at that yacht club. I designed a boat that was just shy of 4' long, with a deep fin keel with a lot of lead, and a tall sloop rig. She was built with 1/8" thick poplar plywood from the lumberyard. I built her as I build my kayaks using the stitch-and-glue system. On launching day it was blowing pretty hard. As it turned out, the only one brave enough to join me on

## The R/C Sailing Model *Independence*

By Eric Schade



the water was Mr Kirby, himself. We had a merry sail, surfing down the waves and zip-ping this way and that. I don't recall if we actually raced, but we had a good time and were pretty well matched.

The next season, Dot, with sons in tow, came to my house and we built a second boat to the same plan. Later, I built two more of a slightly more buildable form. I then decided this boat had some merit as a kit boat. I drew plans for it so that a guy with a computer controlled laser (small "L") cutter could cut it out of plywood. I e-mailed files to him, he US-mailed parts back to me. This was great! Less time with tedious cutting out of parts, more time to assemble, decorate and sail the boat! I offered the kit under the name *Independence*.

Soon, the Wooden Boat Shop, a Connecticut boat building school, asked me to offer a class building the model. Four father and son teams built four of them in two weekends. Later, several more people from the Wooden Boat Shop built them, including David Jackson, who became a big promoter of the growing class of model boats. David is a retired lawyer who has endless energy and a passion for building and using small boats.

In the last few years he has asked me to provide him a bunch of kits for group building projects. He has built them at the *Wooden Boat School* in Brooklin, Maine and at home in Connecticut he has built quite a fleet at a local yacht club. Last summer, he suggested that I talk with John Harris at Chesapeake Light Craft (CLC) about having him produce and market kits of the *Independence* as a new addition to their line of full size small boat kits. As I had been designing boats for CLC for several years, this seemed to be a great idea. John thought so too.

This past fall, I built two prototypes, again revising the design, wrote new building instructions, and took a bunch of photos to get the *Independence* ready to be a standout kit for CLC. The new kit will be computer router cut from the highest quality marine plywood and be complete with all the materials, fittings and electronics to complete the model.

This has been an interesting project, giving me a chance to hone my engineering skills. Where previously I had made the fittings by hand, as I would for a single model, I felt that it would make a better kit to use stock and specially made fittings. I spent a bit of time redesigning some of the hard to make metal fittings so that they could be machine cut to be easily bent and assembled by the builder. With the help of Ron, who is a first rate model machinist, I made an aluminum mold for the lead ballast for the keel. This facilitated making high quality ballast for the kit in larger numbers than I had been able to make them previously. CLC uses a computer-controlled router to cut out its kits. This required that I redesign some of the plywood parts to suit this form of manufacture.

The new kit makes a lovely model boat. Her sailing abilities are great fun. She is fast and responsive. She stands up well in strong breezes. CLC uses beautiful plywood as the basis of the kit. Okoume makes up the bulk of the hull, keel and rudder. Okoume is a honey colored African hardwood. The plywood is carefully manufactured with waterproof glue for marine use. To give the boat an even prettier look, sapele plywood is used for several key parts. The sides and transom are made from this beautiful dark mahogany-like marine plywood. The mast and booms are

An early *Independence* fleet from the Wooden Boat Shop meeting in Stamford, Connecticut.



Early sea trials.





precision milled from nice clear cypress wood. Brass and stainless steel hardware and fittings are strong and functional. Sails are made from lightweight nylon sailcloth like that used when making full size spinners. The high strength Dacron rigging line is designed for flying big kites. A two-channel radio control is included with servos for both the rudder and sail control.

Assembling the kit should take most folks about 40 to 60 hours of work. Basic tools needed include a block plane, small hand saw, pliers, drill, files, cloths-pin clamps, several sheets of sandpaper, masking tape and some paint brushes.

Assembly starts with a slot together skeleton frame. The skeleton includes slots for the keel and for the mast. Hull planks are beveled, then they are wired together onto the skeleton. When all the hull parts are assembled, epoxy is used to glue them together. The copper wires are then either removed or clipped off flush with the outside surface. The keel and rudder fins are laminated and carved to an airfoil shape, and then the lead ballast and brass rudder post are epoxied on. The radio equipment is all housed in the "cabin" to keep it dry.

The mast is assembled from several pre-milled strips of wood, then carved to shape. A pre-milled slot in the rear edge of the mast holds the mainsail. The sails are cut using a paper pattern and assembled using sail tape and rigging line. Fishing snap swivels are used to attach sails and rigging so that the boat can be easily disassembled for transport. The mast and keel just slot into the hull, the



Sailing the *Independence* model on Center Pond near my home in Maine.

rudder slips into the rudder tube and is held in place by a set screw on the tiller. The instructions detail all steps of the process from opening the box to sailing away.

I have had a great time building and sailing the *Independence*. I have three of them and often take them on vacation with me. My kids like to sail them with me too. If you like to build small boats, the *Independence* sailing model will be a fun little diversion for a season in the shop.



A prototype *Independence* hull and the skeleton frame.



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Punkin Eater in action at St Michaels, MD in 2007.

At the meeting to wrap up last fall's MASCF I made so bold as to shoot off my mouth. Now, after some months without really giving it much thought, it still seems like a good idea.

Sad to say, really small boats, nominal 8 footers, are looked upon with disdain by most sailors. The Optimist Pram is very popular but is viewed as a kid's boat. The El Toro has it's adherents, and down on the Wicomico a bunch of guys race Nutshells.

I had an experience at the 25th MASCF at St Michaels, Maryland in 2007 that kinda went to my head. There is a sailing race on the Saturday afternoon which is lots of fun and visually glorious, so the Punkin Eater had to be there. I lingered over lunch and missed the skippers' meeting. Not to worry! I have participated a number of times and knew the course.

I swung around the committee boat and hit the line just after the gun. Strangely, I was all alone. I was headed east while the fleet went north. I was soon hot on the trail and ere long passed a yellow 12'-14' skiff sailed by a well known Chesapeake yachtsman. Shortly thereafter, I overhauled two 14'-16' double enders. I was quite elated and driving hard while concentrating on the mark well to the north.

Oddly, there was only one guy ahead of me and a look around found the fleet off to

## The Advantage of 8-Footers

By Jim Thayer

the west. Obviously I had boo-boomed. I was awarded a lovely green ribbon for sailing "somewhere" so all was not lost. The foregoing is meant to convince you that an 8 footer can be a serious sailboat, however, I'm not promoting it for passage making.

I do revel in sailing small ponds, zip-ping in and out of slips at marinas and such nonsense. Steve Axon and I had a fine sail from Port Hudson up to Ft Worden at the last Port Townsend affair. Some years ago John England and I, sitting P & S, trading sheet and tiller on each tack, sailed five miles or so from Bell's Creek to Yankee Point without the least discomfort. So, 8 footers are not just kid's boats or one man toys.

What I proposed at MASCF was a race, right in the cove, for 8 footers, around six or eight marks. It would be a delight to watch from shore. This contest would be known as the Booth Cup and the prize, a fifth of Old Crow and a pound of scrapple. Probably this would morph into a series for kids, couples, father and daughter, or who knows what. More trophies would turn up, probably homemade.

Now for the boat. My first design, the Wee Punkin, had a pram bow and a near vertical transom with double planked bottom of  $\frac{1}{8}$ " doorskin. Bob Booth built one and had a great time with it. It was light and easy to handle for a guy north of 80. I built several and sold quite a few plans before it dawned on me that I was cutting off and wasting 5"-6" of bottom planking that stuck out beyond the transom. This gave rise to a major mutation resulting in the reverse transom Punkin Eater. Thus the docile Wee Punkin turned overnight into a vicious predator, which doubtless gained a tenth of a knot or so.

I am proposing a development class with a box rule. You can see I've been reading too much racing stuff. After some thought, I have concluded that we need only one limited dimension: hull length. Readily available plywood is 8' long. With a pram bow and reverse transom one can come up with a reasonable looking boat about 8'6" without scarfing any planks. Nice imported ply is 250cm, which is a couple inches over 8'. It's much nicer than run-of-the-mill stuff normally available. Doorskin seems to pass the boil test but soon

goes to pieces in the weather. Does anybody have a line on some good  $\frac{3}{16}$ " ply for a reasonable price?

Well, let's get on with the project. The boat shall have a single hull with a maximum length between perpendiculars of 8'6". Oops! Does that exclude cats? Nah. I doubt that they have a chance at this length. The rest is up to the designer. Hull material, sail material, and so on, is wide open. I, personally insist on a boat I can sleep on. I have cruised my Punkin Eater on Lake Powell for several days and slept aboard.

Safety is a prime concern. The boat must be able to sail swamped. There must be some means of reefing the sail underway. A bailer is required and perhaps some other rules.

I'm not into racing, so much as having a good time. Forget all the rules and sea lawyers. We want a course that puts a premium on snappy boat handling, testing both boat and helmsman. Let's have 6-8 marks in a limited area with a reach to test for speed.

This could be a very practical boat. It's cheap to build, easily car topped, stands up against the wall in the garage, and doesn't need much water to sail. And it might get the kids off the couch.

Designing such a boat is not rocket science. No doubt the pros will come up with some tank tested world beater, but don't dismiss the notion out of hand just because you have never designed or built a boat. Start with one of Phil's boxes and go from there. Look at the photos of the Punkin Eater and tweak it a little bit. For a sail, go with house wrap till you get it perfected. Should we specify house wrap?

Now, don't tell me you are too busy. It's been over a year now since I said my piece at the 2007 MASCF but then writing is a lot harder than building. Lacy England, at the meet in question, talked me out of my Punkin Eater, so now I have to build a new one. As soon as Old Sol lays on some heat, I'll whip up a strongback and start something. I'll probably spring a batten on a piece of wallboard and puzzle over a suitable beam, and how much bottom curve to keep the transom out of the water but the rest of it is pretty straightforward. As long as it doesn't sink, we all can be winners. Maybe I, or somebody else, will throw out a few suggestions as we go along.

This is a national development class. Regionals at Starvation for the west and St Michaels in the east. State with the most boats gets to host the nationals. How about a Raid at Powell?

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Wee Punkin capsized test 1991

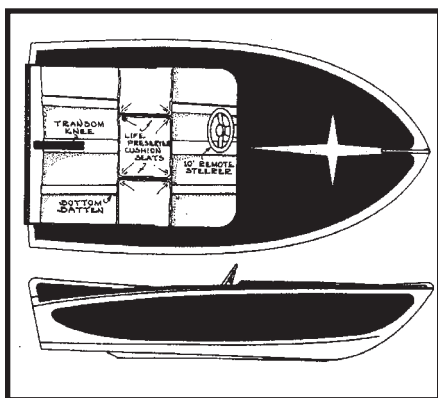


Wee Punkin at speed planing at a windy Newport, RI years ago.

## Pee Wee An 8' Mini-Runabout (Build in Plywood)

The Pee Wee is small in size, small in cost, but BIG in fun. While not intended for hulking 200 pounders, it's great for the younger set or featherweight adults. A tiny outboard motor will really make it scoot, and yet it's safe when used within its capabilities.

The Pee Wee is inexpensive to build. Only two sheets of 4'x8' plywood are required for the planking, while the decking and interior will consume most of another. A few "sticks" of lumber and a handful of fastenings are just about all that are required to complete the project. Dad will be the "hero" of the kids when he builds them a Pee Wee. In fact, they can build their own with a little supervision.



## Top Ten Designs

Since opening for business in the '60s Glen L Marine Designs has turned out hundreds of designs for home builders. The ten most popular designs in terms of plans sold are overwhelmingly for small outboard speedboat type skiffs. We will be bringing you each month a look at these top ten, starting the countdown in this issue with #10.

### Characteristics

Length overall 7'6"

Beam 4'0"

Hull depth 21"

Average passengers 1

Hull weight (approx) 50lbs

Hull type: Vee bottom hard chine hull developed for sheet plywood planking.

Power: Outboard motor to 5hp



Available for This Design

- Plans & Patterns
- Fastening Kit
- Fiberglass Kit
- Frame Kit

### Complete Plans

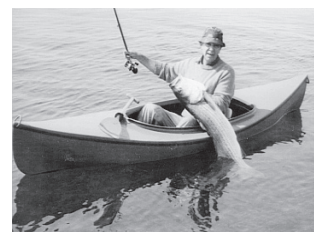
Include full size patterns for the stem, transom knee, and half section patterns for the frames and transom. Includes instructions, bill of materials, and fastening schedule.

### Frame Kit

For quick and easy assembly, use a Frame Kit that includes transom fully framed, frames fully assembled, stem, breasthook, deck and dash beams, plus complete plans with instructions, bill of materials, and fastening schedule. Shipped F.O.B., weight approx. 35lbs.

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While Minnesota boasts of 10,000 lakes, Finland offers over 60,000 named lakes and probably an equal number of smaller unnamed lakes that would warrant a couple of resorts and a public launch and dock in the U.S. Much of Finland could be described accurately as a series of lakes interrupted by occasional spits of densely wooded land. This Nordic nation, as old as any known civilization in Europe, has always considered itself one with the water and forests.

Wood is both an economic and artistic element of the Finnish world. Virtually all household floors are pine or birch and definitely not covered with wall-to-wall carpets. Wall decorations are wooden, log cabins dot the lakes, craft fairs feature wooden baskets and artifacts, and even their saunas are often wood fired featuring wooden buckets and ladles. In fact, wood and paper products are their number one exports, and virtually all paper is made in Finland or on a paper making machine made in the country.

Thirty five years ago when I first ventured into the Land of the Midnight Sun I was not surprised to see that boats were an essential element of rural living. Almost all farmers had lakes abutting their land somewhere, and they depended on fish as a staple of their diet. Still basically a rustic country, Finland's population ate pike, white fish, and perch at virtually every meal including breakfast. These fish were usually caught by gill nets set in the early dawn and checked in late evening of every summer day. Almost all the non-city dwellers had simple, wooden rowing boats hidden under the trees near a lake. Oars were the means of propulsion rather than the noisy motors seen in America or other countries.

Fishing with a pole was more of a recreational activity than means to attain food staples. The Rapala factory, just between Lahti and Kuhmoinen, makes the best lures in the world but the cost of them in Finland is higher than at Wal-Mart in the U.S. Still, the lures are an essential element in fishing for the larger pike and walleyes and other eating fish. Every Finn has a decent fish pole, a plethora of bait, and a keen sense of what lures to use. I watched one young son of the North use fish eyes rather successfully. Nevertheless, fishing is for fun; gill nets are for food.

Several years ago I wrote an article on the simple and common Finnish lake fishing boat. Between 3m-4m in length, these boats could handle large amounts of netting and fishing gear. The rare small gas powered engines allowed a more leisurely trip; however,

## Good Old Boats of Finland

By Stephen D. (Doc) Regan

with fuel cost running four times that in the U.S., 5hp motors were about the limit seen on these craft. They were inexpensive, plain, light, and rowed with 8' oars. Wooden boats tended to be hand built but the Finns had also discovered that fiberglass was good enough for many.

These boats were strictly utilitarian, and aesthetics were not a consideration. One elderly Finnish relative lived on a peninsula inaccessible by car. One had to row across the lake to get to her house. My wife had a fit knowing that to visit her we would have to row a lengthy distance with an eight month old baby in hand. She also remembered tales of her family rowing one of these pedestrian boats to church on Sunday because it was easier and faster than taking the bus (cars were few, expensive, and a financial burden to run).

Today the scene has drastically changed. The evolution of the European Union has rapidly launched Finnish expansion into a futuristic world. A small rubber boot manufacturer named for the town of its existence suddenly ventured away from work footwear and into telecommunications. The town and company is easily recognized: Nokia.

Nokia alone probably was the greatest single fiscal influence on the development of this country. The company created the first generation of cell phones used ubiquitously fifteen years ago in every bus, train, and plane. Long before teeny-boppers were seen lounging in American malls with phones glued to their ears, Finnish citizens were enjoying immediate telephone access anywhere to anywhere plus easy and free access to something called the Internet. Today the Finnish market is based around Nokia. In the burgeoning European Union, Finland has carved itself as the niche center for electronics and telecommunications for all of Europe.

The result of the this technological boom has shifted Finns away from their rural environments and into the cities, especially the greater metropolitan area of Helsinki. The population shift from rural to urban has been astounding. However, the rural, lake oriented atmosphere continues to call the people, and virtually all the urban dwellers either have, or seek to have, a summer cabin on a lake. The need for a lake,

a cabin, a sauna, and a good old boat continues despite all the creature comforts of highly westernized, urban Finland.

Like most of Nordic Europe, Finland offers workers starting vacation time of four weeks and quickly advances them to six or eight weeks vacation; therefore, urban Finns prefer to spend their getaway time on the lakes, especially during the midnight sun time in the summer.

This past year a quick perusal of lake-land Finland noted the amazing increase of pleasure craft in the lakes that formerly sported only fishing boats. Even these proffer no small amount of fishing gear. Where rowing was once the only means of propulsion the rise of small outboards cannot fail to be noticed. Further, the blossoming of sailboats and larger craft is greatly apparent. In the past only coastal cities such as Uusikaupunki and Helsinki boasted sizable sailboats. Now one can see quality sailboats in small villages like Kuhmoinen or Harmoinen on Lake Paijanne.

What does catch the eye of aficionado is that wood is a common element of Finnish craft. For the Finns, wood is life, and it is virtually a mandatory element of their boats unlike in America where fiberglass and steel predominate. A Finnish boat without wood is like a Finnish house without a sauna.

Virtually all small boats (and even big ones) have wooden decks, topsides, or minimally wooden trim. The trawler type boat pictured has a standard fiberglass superstructure but the hull is wood. Across the Kuhmoinen harbor tied under an abandoned mill rests a plywood cruiser with a sharply pointed stern.

The desire for wooden boats is easily observed around Helsinki. The drydock at Suonienlinna, the ancient fortress in the Gulf of Finland protecting the capital city (and immediately blocking the way to St Petersburg in Russia over which the Soviet Union attempted to invade Finland in 1939), is one of the oldest continually operating drydocks in Europe. Once powered by a huge windmill, the drydock is now used for both the Finnish Navy and Finnish boaters. Currently two privately owned sizable wooden vessels are under construction there. Obviously, the orientation toward wood is apparent.

As long as water fills the multitude of lakes and the Finns have access to their lakes, small boats will continue to be a significant element of their lives. In the past boats were for food; now boats are for fun. Give Finns a cabin, a sauna, and a good old boat and they are happy all summer.

A wooden boat at abandoned mill in Kuhmoinen.



Lake Paijanne boat, a blend of wood and fiberglass.



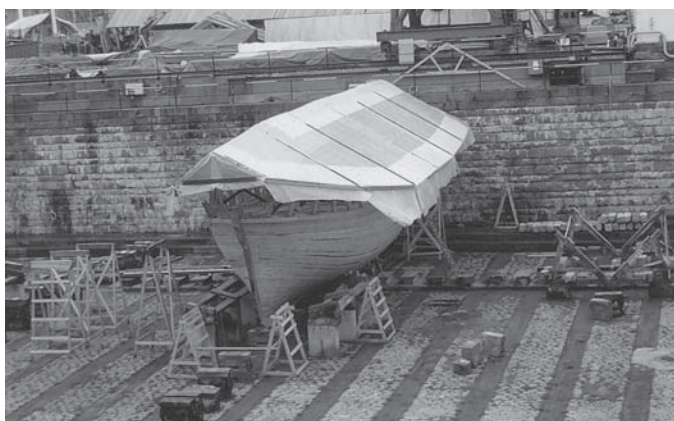




Standard wooden workboat in Kuhmoinen.



Trawler yacht with wooden hull and fiberglass cabin structure.



Large wooden boat being constructed in Suomenlinna drydock.

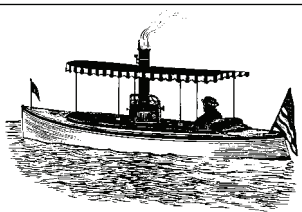


Wooden pleasure craft in Kuhmoinen.

Good old boats never die. Havmoinen.



Stemhead closeup on wooden hull shows familiar varnish decay.



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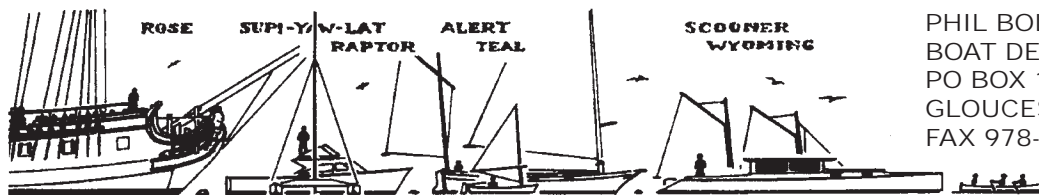
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We take it most readers are aware of the Dovekie camping cruiser. We last wrote about them three years ago, in the January 1, 2006 issue while Edey & Duff were building them, Peter and Margaret Duff did a series of full-page advertisements prominently placed in the old, much missed *Small Boat Journal* which brought out the possibilities of the boats in dramatic fashion (my favorites were one with Peter and Margaret relaxing in the cockpit, the Dovekie sitting upright on a smooth wet surface, with a pair of rubber boots standing alongside on the same surface; and one with two Dovekies nestled side-by-side in a tidal pool almost surrounded by tall granite ledges.).

The publicity attracted the attention of some home building types, who wrote us asking for plans. But the only plans of the Dovekie were those for the Airex-fiberglass production version. It was true that I had originally had wood in mind, and a shape not very much different from the plastic boat but, in the first place, one reason I had been open to Peter's proposition to build one in one-off Airex was that that shape would have been laborious and not very efficient for wood construction (the other reasons were the temptation of a production follow-on, and that it was always fun to work with Peter).

## Bolger on Design

### Plywood Dovekie

#### Design #344

Length 21'6" – Breadth Overall 5'7"  
Chine Beam 4' 0" – Sail Area 153sf

I resisted the requests for some time, but Charles Burgess finally talked me into doing it. I've mislaid the correspondence by which he did so (this was, after all, over 30 years ago), but once into it I gave fast one-off construction with modest tools and skill level priority over imitating the Dovekie shape. The design became a straightforward "instant boat", with flat bottom and deck wrapped over prefabricated side panels; what Dynamite Payson calls a make-your-own kit.

I kept the straight and level bottom through the mid-body for minimal draft, 6" on 1500lbs. displacement. It also gives the most stability with no, or minimal, ballast, and a solid upright stance when dried out. The bottom rockers up sharply at each end. Without the Dovekie's rounded-off bilge, the chine would produce nasty eddies as the water tried to run from the sides under the bottom at the bow, with high drag and unsteady steering; I shake my head still at skiffs and larger hulls with that designed-in deficiency. A flat profile at the stern, only at the stern (!), will work if it is sharp in plan view. But I thought this one would need her breadth carried to a transom for better stability and cockpit space. Cockpit benches, 6'6" long, were placed very low in the boat for maximum live-ballast effect with a view just clear over the deck. Construction was all  $\frac{3}{8}$ " plywood, doubled on the bottom.

I kept the rowing arrangements of Dovekie but eliminated the seldom used second position. Those familiar with our 18' Camper (#640) might try the two-some rowing after all. Leeboards were the same as those of the production Dovekie. Now we think that they would have been better, tapered the other way, broader at the lower end for more area on the same draft.

The rig is the same as the prototype Dovekie, except that I took a foot off the mast after seeing my niece struggle to raise the Dovekie mast. I lengthened the boom to recover the lost area. The reefing arrangement was not altered. There is no halyard. The sail is rolled up around the clew and leech, in to the mast, which is then swung down and racked, sail and all, to one side on deck. To reef, lower the mast, tie in the reef along the foot, and step the mast on the hull bottom, unstayed above the deck. It's easy to raise the mast in this position, and no bare mast is left above the reefed sail. The reefed center of sail area is ideal. The reef is rather drastic,

but very effective; broken lines show it on the sail plan here. This arrangement was intended to discourage rowing with the mast standing. It worked well for me, though a rather heavy lift to the deck-stepped position while standing on the hull bottom; I meant to make a crutch to give better leverage but never got around to it.

Susanne thinks that this rig, especially having to get the mast down flat on deck and re-step it in a different place just to tie in a reef seems less handy than the spirit of the overall design simplicity would suggest, was not a good idea. An experience with the Birdwatcher's similar sail in a very strong breeze confirmed her objections. I still think the scheme had some merit, or at least that there was reasoning behind it, but I concede that there is a lot to be said for conventional halyards and slab reefing.

I did not promote this design because I thought the Birdwatcher principle, sailing from inside a transparent raised deck, was superior to the open cockpit with spray hood and tent. In fact both I and Susanne have not even thought of it for many years, a strange phenomenon indeed when we are supposed to share with clients the options of craft in her size and type; perhaps apologies are in order... Burgess actually liked the boat he built to this design (though he never got around to getting us photos of it, and just lately Wayne Smith reminded us of her again when he wrote us enthusiastically about the boat he had built to the design.

"My family has used this magic craft in many sea states from Maine to Florida and even into Manitoba province. Your Ply Dovekie has immeasurably expanded the lives of our children's world". Such language makes one think twice about saying "but I've had a better idea". And it's a fact that my own experience of camp-cruising in the (plastic) Dovekie in all weathers was very good.

However, boats to this design, while not at all treacherous and, without overload, are reliably unsinkable, are indeed capsizable, and a Birdwatcher-type raised deck would have saved some stress on the nerves in some circumstances, and some discomfort in others. Or, a modest house over the after end of the designed raised deck, would give a roomier cuddy with enough glass to look forward from low cockpit benches or over from raised benches. Eventually, when we've cleared up some much more pressing must-dos, we'll give in to the temptation of seeing how an 'upgrade' will compare to the original design. While we're at it she might receive a gaff rig, cat or sloop, with conventional halyards to ease Susanne's pinching me...

Plans of the Ply Dovekie, our Design #344, are available as it stands, on three 17 " x 22 " sheets plus typed key, to build one boat, sent priority mail, for \$150, from Phil Bolger & Friends, 66 Atlantic St, Gloucester, MA 01930-1627.

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Sometimes a problem develops over time through no fault of one's own. Corroded aluminum caused by attachment to a stainless fitting that is not that easy to inspect comes to mind. An old trick used with halyard winches on aluminum masts was the insertion of one or two sheets of plastic milk container sections between the winch and the mast. The plastic provided a barrier between the two metals, was easy to cut to fit the shape of the winch and would last for years.

What becomes interesting is when aluminum screws/bolts are used on an aluminum mast or boom and left in place for 10 or 12 years. The two pieces can become one! Some of the modern lubes may release the pairing, if the fluid can be gotten down onto the threads, but not that often. Fortunately, most of my problems with separating two items of marine hardware involve stainless steel screws/bolts into/through aluminum or stainless steel fittings. In most cases, some light oil on the head that will soak down

## From the Lee Rail

By C. Henry Depew

around the threads results in a nice clean release. However, when something needs to be repaired on the water, I seldom have time to oil the fitting or otherwise do anything but use brute force (which usually breaks some part of the device).

As I write this article in January I am working on a couple of electrical problems on our boat. I am now trying to trace the wiring to find the break or bad connection. Of course the wire runs where it is hard to see back to the switch in the cabin. However, at the dock is the time to fix any problem rather than on the water as the sun sets. One of the possible actions to avoid problems is to make sure that everything is working before I leave the dock and repair that which needs repair when I can get to the tools needed, spare parts, and the like.

A number of years ago, the generator on our auxiliary powered sailboat of the time failed on a trip back to St Marks from Alligator Point with the sun setting. I did not know of the problem until we reached the start of the series of oyster bars and I turned on the searchlight to see where the next marker was only to have the engine start to die as it had been running on the battery (I also found later that the amp gauge was stuck on the charging side). OK, we will sail the boat in.

With an outgoing tide and some heavy rain coming down the St Marks River that was not an option. We anchored out of the channel. It was not a good night. The next morning when we could see the channel, I was able to start the engine and head on to port with the idea that if the engine died, we would be farther up the river and, with luck, be able to hail a boat for a tow. The battery held long enough to get to the dock. Later analysis found that the alternator ran fine with

the engine turning at 1,500rpm, but did not work at the cruise setting of 1,200rpm. Running the river at night had the engine down to about 800rpm. All of the above could have been avoided if I had made sure all the gauges were working correctly before I had left the dock the previous day.


Checking everything out before getting underway does not always insure an uneventful trip. When we trailered our Sisu 22, I used to check everything out in the yard before hooking up for the trip to the coast. One time everything checked out and off we went. Got the boat launched and everything loaded only to find the engine would not start. I could not even get it to turn over. Mutter, mutter. The batteries were good but there was no power at the engine. I started lightly squeezing the power cable from the battery to the master switch checking for firmness or a warm spot. Instead, I heard a faint "crackle" at one point along the line. A heavy squeeze and a loud crackle told me that the power cable had corroded internally at a low spot.

Pull the boat, go back to Tallahassee and replace the cable from the battery to the master switch. This time, the power cable had no sags. All we could figure out was that over time condensation had gathered at the low spot and slowly corroded the copper wires and the vibration of trailering the boat to the coast had finished the job. Better at the dock than out on the water!

The above came to mind since the voltmeter in our current boat is stuck on "0". I ran checks on the alternator and wiring side of the gauge and all is working correctly. I now need to get to the connections to the stuck gauge behind a mass of wiring bundled at the factory and not moved since the instrument panel was mounted in 1985 (the year the boat was built). One factor in my favor is that when the boat was built, those installing the instrument panel (and the rest of the wiring) left the wires long enough to give me some slack. A lot of current boats (and vehicles) seem to have the wiring "exactly" the proper length. There is no "play" left in the wiring bundle for installing replacement parts or the like. I am not sure which is worse, working under the dash of a car or behind the instrument panel of a boat.

As those who have read previous articles will remember, I have had problems with the 50 gallon fuel tanks in our current boat. The engine does not burn diesel fuel at any great rate and we can go for a year on 25 gallons or so. Letting the fuel set (even with conditioners therein) leads to problems and partly full tanks allows moisture to build up in the tanks even with working vents. At the moment, both 50 gallon tanks are empty (or nearly so) and I am looking into an auxiliary fuel tank in the 5 to 10 gallon range. One suggestion was a small, aluminum beer keg. Another was any 300-series stainless steel tank of the appropriate size.

I found a 5 gallon soda container made of 300-series stainless steel, but it was taller than the space available and modifying the container for my purpose would have been a challenge. I e-mailed the container's manufacturer about what I was planning to do with their container to make sure it was a 300-series stainless steel container. The e-mail I got back assured me it was of the required composition and noted that the container was not constructed for the purpose I had in mind. Since the container was too tall and no one seems to build a 5-10 gallon auxiliary diesel fuel tank, I am now back to looking for an alternative fuel tank for the boat.



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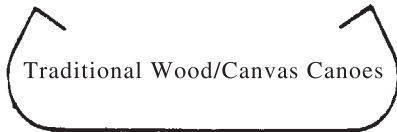
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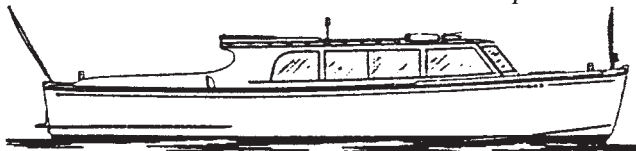


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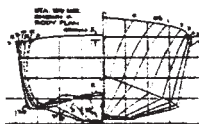
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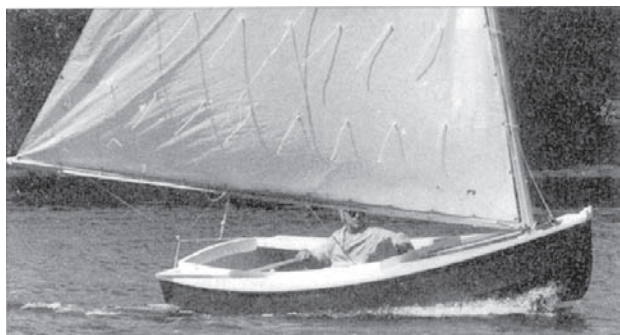
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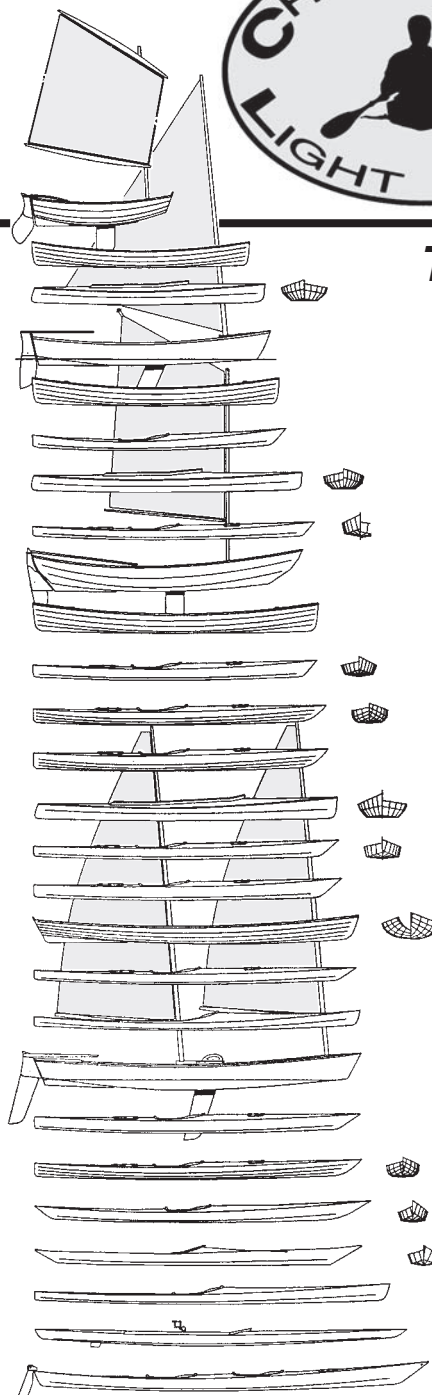
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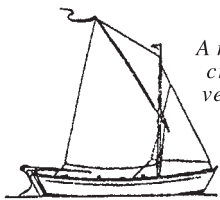
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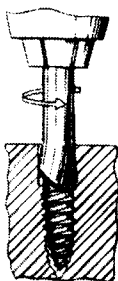
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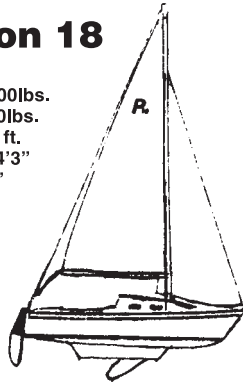


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# Shiver Me Timbers *By: Robert L. Summers*

## Dealing with the "Authorities"





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## A Nautical Odyssey

25 years ago Steve built this wooden boat for a customer in Connecticut. 5 years ago we bought it back from him...he'd bought another of Steve's boats, in slightly better shape, from a friend. We restored the boat and traded it for an 8 yr old Chevy Suburban in Hot Springs, Arkansas. We then sold the Suburban to an international business consultant who owns an alpaca farm in Vermont. We needed cash and he needed a reliable vehicle for hauling feed to the animals and pulling their trailer to shows. All boats, customers, Suburbans and alpacas seem to be doing well. As are we.



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